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No. 67.

THE HAUNTING THOUGHT.

BY E. E. REKFOR.

I can not tell you why it is,
When sitting by your side,
But there's a yearning in my heart
For something unsupplied.
The thought keeps wandering thro' my brain,
And haunts me o'er and o'er,
Until I often say to you,
"Why don't you love me more?"
Sometimes I hold your hands in mine,
And whisper tender words,
Until my heart seems vocal with
The melody of birds.
But still that thought is always there,
To whisper o'er and o'er,
And haunt me till I say to you,
"Why don't you love me more?"
It can not be that in your heart
No fond love answers mine,
For you have whispered, many times,
The words—forever thine.
And yet that haunting thought will rise,
To whisper o'er and o'er,
Its doubts, until I say to you,
"Why don't you love me more?"

The Detective's Ward:

OR,
THE FORTUNES OF A BOWERY GIRL.

BY AGILE PENNE,

AUTHOR OF "ORPHAN SUE," "THE ORANGE GIRL,"
ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

A STRANGE GIRL.

"When am I to see this gentleman?" the girl asked, suddenly.

"To-morrow afternoon," the detective replied.

"Where?"

"At his house. I am to take you there."

"I don't want to go!" Lill exclaimed, abruptly.

"Eh?" cried Peters, in utter astonishment.

"I say that I don't want to go to see this old gent!" said the girl, petulantly, a pout upon her full lips.

"Don't want to go?" The shrewd detective was utterly astounded.

"No; I never saw him but once, and I don't care if I never see him again," Lill replied, a look of vexation upon her face.

"But, he may be able to tell you something about your parents," Peters urged.

"What do I care for 'em?" the girl exclaimed, quickly. "They never did nothing for me. I don't care whether I ever see 'em or not. They must have had cruel hearts to leave me in the power of Jocky all these long years. A rough bringing up I've had. The Bowery has been my father and mother; leastways it allers protected me. Many's the night I've slept on the cold stones, afraid to go home, 'cos Jocky'd beat me. I've curled myself up like a dog in a dark corner and slept and dreamed of a home such as some girls have—a home all nice and warm; plenty of loving faces 'round me and kind words, instead of blows and curses."

"And yet now, when that home is offered you, you say that you don't want to go," said Peters, whose naturally kind heart felt deeply for the friendless girl.

"I don't know any thing about him—the gent, I mean," the girl replied. "Why should he trouble himself 'bout me? I don't believe that I've got any father or mother anywhere in this world. I never seed anybody trouble themselves 'bout anybody else yet, unless they thought they could make something by it."

The detective fully realized how dark the life of the girl had been by the one little sentence. The cold, hard cry of the world was in her mouth. Each for himself, none for his brother.

"Well, but won't you go and see the gentleman to-morrow?" the detective asked.

"I'd rather not!" the girl exclaimed quickly.

"But he has given me twenty dollars to buy you new clothes. He wants to see you all dressed up like a lady."

A wishful look came over the girl's face, and her eyes brightened up for a moment at the words of the detective. It was only for a moment, though; and then again the dull, vacant expression was on her features.

"I ain't a lady," she said, slowly. "Fine feathers don't allers make fine birds."

"But this old gentleman will make a lady of you," the officer urged. "Dressed up nicely, few girls on this street will look any better than you. Why, Lillian—I suppose your name is Lillian, or maybe, Lily?"

"No, Lillian."

"Well, as I was going to say: when you're dressed up, you'll look very pretty."

"Do you think I'm pretty?" the girl asked, suddenly.

The abruptness of the question as well as its nature astonished Peters.

"Yes, I think that you are very pretty," he said, slowly. "When you are dressed up you will be beautiful."

A smile passed rapidly over the girl's face, and as she looked into the face of the detective, he saw a strange, peculiar light shining in the full black orbs of the child. Never before had he seen such a light in the eyes of any one of womankind.

The smile and the look were the girl's answer to the speech of the detective.

Finding that she did not speak, Peters continued:

"This old gentleman is wealthy—more money than he knows what to do with. He either knows something about your parents, or else he has taken a fancy to you. At any rate, I am sure from what he said to me, that he intends to look after you for the future."

Again the girl did not reply, but walked



A strange look was on the face of the Southerner—a look which puzzled the young man.

silently on for a few moments, evidently in deep thought.

"If my father is alive, and he should find me, would he have the right to make me do as he said?" she asked, abruptly.

"Undoubtedly," replied Peters, somewhat astonished at the question.

"Do you think that this old gentleman is my father?" she asked, quickly.

"No, I do not." The detective began to wonder why the girl was asking all these odd questions.

"Then he has no right to make me do as he pleases?"

"Of course not, unless you give the right by allowing him to adopt you as his daughter."

"Not much, you bet!" cried Lill, suddenly; and with great determination in her earnest features.

Again the words grated on the ear of the detective. Yet he had heard many a woman use the slang of the streets before.

The quick eyes of the girl detected the look of annoyance upon the officer's face.

"There it is again!" she cried, in an injured tone. "What have I done? I know that I either said or done something wrong, 'cos you wouldn't look that way if I hadn't made you feel bad. What is it?"

"Well, nothing particular," replied Peters, slowly; and in his own mind he instantly decided that the Bowery Girl was one of the strangest characters that he had ever met with in all his life.

"Yes, there is!" said the girl, aggrieved.

"It's real mean that you won't tell a feller."

And Peters detected a tear glistening in the dark eye of the girl—tears in the eyes that had only flashed lightning at the Italian's threat.

"Well, if you must know: why do you use those rough words?"

"What words?"

"Why, that slang; 'you bet' and 'not much'?"

The girl looked at the speaker in wonder.

"Everybody says 'em," she replied.

"But it isn't right for a girl—a lady, to use such words; it may be all right for men and boys."

"Isn't it nice?" the girl asked, wonder in her great eyes.

"No."

"I'll never say 'em no more!" Lill exclaimed, with great determination. "If I say any thing more that ain't right, jest you stop me and tell me of it, and I won't do it."

"Well, that's a bargain. But, to come back to what we were talking about—the old gentleman."

"I won't go with him!" said Lill, decidedly.

"But, what will you do?"

"I don't know. Do you think Jocky can make the police compel me to go back to him if I don't want to?"

"No; I'll take care of that."

"And the old gentleman can't make me go with him?"

"Not unless you want to."

"That's all right!" Lill exclaimed, with an air of great satisfaction. "Then, I'll stay with you!"

"Stay with me!" cried the detective, in utter astonishment.

"Yes—I haven't got anybody else; and I'll stay with you, 'cos I like you—you've been good to me."

In the face of the girl Peters read perfect faith and trust.

"But, what will you do with me?" Peters asked, in bewilderment.

"Any thing you want me to. I can wash dishes, and sweep, and clean house. I used to allers clean the saloon for Jocky. You can take me home to your wife, and I'll tell her how good you've been to me, and how I want to pay you for it; and she can teach me jest what she wants me to do."

Peters listened attentively, while the girl sketched out the new career that opened so brilliantly before her. He watched the eager face, the beaming eyes, and the full, red lips, rich in their dewy freshness.

"But, I haven't got any wife!" Peters exclaimed.

"Oh!" Lill was disappointed. She thought for a moment. "Don't you know any nice lady that you could get for a wife, so she could teach me?" she asked, with a glowing face, as the bright thought came to her.

Peters was obliged, reluctantly, to confess that he didn't.

Again the girl was silent. The odd, thoughtful look, that made her seem old beyond her years, came back over her face.

"Oh, I know!" she cried, suddenly, her face brightening up again; "you can give me some money to buy some things, and I can go and sell them on the Bowery, and bring the money to you, as I used to to Jocky."

"But, would you rather do that than go and live with this old gentleman, and have nice clothes, and plenty to eat, and every thing comfortable?" Peters asked, in some little astonishment.

"Yes," the girl answered, promptly. She did not hesitate an instant in her reply.

"But, I can't understand why you should turn away from a life of comfort to one of toil."

"I can't tell," the girl said, simply.

Peters did not stop to consider that, perhaps, the reason she could not tell was that she did not wish to—she accepted her words in the other sense—lack of knowledge.

"I'm sorry—I thought that the gentleman would be very good to you," he said, slowly.

"Do you want me to go to him?" Lill asked, quickly.

"Yes."

"Well, I'll go!" she said, with determination.

The sudden change again astonished the detective. He began to think that the child had strange whims.

By this time the party of three had arrived at the office of the firm of Peters & Henry, on Broadway, just above Broome street.

The front room was the office, the back one a snug bedchamber.

"There, Lill, you stay here to-night; we'll go to a hotel, and come for you in the morning. You can lock yourself in. Good-night."

The Bowery girl had sweet dreams that night.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RECOGNITION.

ALGERNON shook his head, dubiously, at the confident words of the gallant colonel.

"My uncle going to be married? Oh, no—he has no idea of that sort," the young man said.

The colonel stroked his mustache, thoughtfully.

"Not to be married, eh? Well, I confess, then, that my wits are at fault. But, you say that you will not inherit your uncle's property?"

"Exactly."

"Has another relative appeared—one nearer than yourself?"

"Yes; now you have guessed it."

"But, I have often heard you say—that is, if my memory serves me right—that you were the only relative that your uncle has."

"So I've always thought, until I was informed by the old gentleman, an hour or so ago, that I might expect to see his daughter very soon."

"His daughter!" exclaimed the colonel, evidently in great amazement.

"Yes," replied Algernon, somewhat astonished at the colonel's manner.

A strange look was on the face of the Southerner—a look which puzzled the young man. He could not understand what possible interest, except that dictated by friendship, the colonel could have in his words.

"You look surprised, colonel," Algernon said.

"Oh, no—not particularly; only, as I have often heard you say that you were the only relative of your uncle, the sudden appearance of a daughter astonishes me a little," the colonel replied.

"It astonishes me a great deal. Why, you could have knocked me down with a feather."

"Then, this daughter is to inherit all your uncle's property?"

"Yes."

The colonel caressed his long mustache in an absent manner. The lines upon his face told that he was deep in thought.

"It's an awful lookout for a fellow, isn't it?" asked the young man, mournfully.

"Yes; it is not pleasant to lose even the prospect of a fortune; but, never say die—never give up the race till the winner's past the post!" cried the colonel, cheerfully.

"What do you advise me to do?"

"Well, this daughter is, probably, quite a young lady. Why not try to captivate her? Marry her, and thus get back the fortune that her coming has taken from you."

Algernon shook his head.

"Won't do, eh?" the colonel questioned.

"No. In the first place, uncle might object to the match; in the second place, the girl might not be pleased with me; and, in the third place, I am already engaged to be married."

"The deuce you are!" exclaimed the colonel, in amazement. "Who is the lady?"

"Miss Blake, my uncle's housekeeper."

"What! some scheming siren, older than yourself, who has entrapped you into an engagement?"

"No—nothing of the sort!" replied Algernon, coloring up as he spoke. "The lady is younger than myself—a mere girl. Her mother was my uncle's housekeeper, and when she died, Dorothy—that's her name—took her mother's place."

"Is she pretty?"

"An angel!"

"Ah, yes," said the colonel, dryly; "the girls that young men fall in love with are always angels. But, do you really intend to marry this girl?"

"Yes."

"Is she worth any thing?"

"No; utterly dependent upon my uncle's bounty."

"Well, he may be willing to settle something handsome on her. In that case, your union with this girl wouldn't be such a bad idea, after all."

"On the contrary, my uncle has forbid me to think of Miss Blake. It was only at our last interview he warned me that there must be no love nonsense between us," Algernon said, in a dismal tone.

"I'll luck at all points of the compass!"

"Yes. The future doesn't look very bright for me."

"Don't despair—the darkest hour is always before the dawn. An old saying, but an extremely true one!" exclaimed the colonel, consolingly.

"Have you any advice to offer?" asked Algernon, feeling a little encouraged by the cheering manner of his friend.

"I can give you some information," the colonel replied, meaningly.

"Information about what?" asked the young man, in wonder.

"About your uncle's daughter."

"What can you possibly know about it?" exclaimed Algernon, astonished.

"More than you think," the colonel replied, with a knowing smile. "I knew your uncle years ago."

"You did?"

"Yes," replied the Southerner, quietly, enjoying the young man's astonishment.

"But I never heard you say any thing about it."

"Very likely," the colonel said, carelessly. "I never thought it necessary to mention it, but it is the truth. Your uncle and I were quite intimate years ago. And now for the information. In the first place, I am almost certain that your uncle was never married."

"But this daughter?" exclaimed the young man, in astonishment.

"A mystery which I will solve before long."

"But still, if he makes her his heir, it doesn't matter whether she is his daughter or not. His wealth will go to her."

"Very true. At present it is of course impossible to decide upon any plan of action. The daughter must come. We must see her—I say 'we,' for I assure you that, for pure friendship's sake, I feel deeply interested in this affair," the colonel said, blandly. "Well, as I said, we must see the daughter—see what she is like, and then decide what must be done."

"Colonel, to be frank with you, I must have some of my uncle's wealth!" Algernon exclaimed, in a strangely emphatic tone for one of his weak nature. "If the girl is really his daughter, then, of course, she has a better claim to it than I; but if she is a stranger, not connected by the ties of blood, why, then, she robs me of my rightful inheritance."

"Exactly, my dear boy!" exclaimed the colonel, decidedly. "In my opinion, you are fully justified in using any and all means to prevent the consummation of this foul wrong; and I feel that, bound as I am by the ties of friendship, I am justified in aiding you to the extent of my power; and he leaned back in his chair, and looked dignified."

"Colonel, you shall have a fair share of the property if you succeed in getting it for me!" Algernon said.

"Don't speak of the filthy lucre!" the Southerner exclaimed, loftily. "We settle as to terms hereafter. The first thing is to see what the daughter is like."

"When she arrives, I'll arrange it so that you shall see her," Algernon said.

"Yes," and the colonel rose to his feet. "Might I suggest a promenade down Broadway?"

"Not at present," Algernon replied, in a slight confusion that did not escape the vigilant eyes of the colonel.

"Another engagement, eh?"

"I—I was talking with Miss Blake when you came, and I promised her that I would return to her as soon as you were gone."

"Dreadful spongy, my dear boy, eh? Well, we all have a touch of it sooner or later in our lives. It's deuced awkward for you just now, I'm afraid; but time will tell."

Algernon accompanied the colonel down to the door. As they approached it, the door-bell rang. The young man opened the door. Peters, the detective, and Lill, the Bowery girl, now dressed neatly in a plain dark suit, were standing on the step.

"Mr. Olkoff in?" the detective asked.

"Yes, sir," Algernon replied, darting a glance at the colonel, as if to call his attention to the girl. "John,"—Algernon addressed the servant who was just approaching— "show this gentleman and lady into the parlor, and call Mr. Olkoff."

The servant obeyed the order.

Hardly had the three entered the parlor, when the young man turned eagerly to the colonel.

"Did you see her?" he asked, but then paused in astonishment as he caught sight of the face of his friend. It was as white as a sheet, and great drops of perspiration stood like waxen beads upon his forehead. The usually cool and smiling colonel was strangely excited.

"Yes, yes; I saw her," the colonel murmured.

"Why, what is the matter, colonel? You are as white as a sheet."

"Am I?" The Southerner made a feeble attempt at a smile.

"Yes; are you ill?"

"Oh, no; a sudden faintness, that's all." The colonel took his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped the drops of perspiration from his forehead.

"I shouldn't be surprised if that girl was the expected daughter of my uncle," Algernon said, in a tone of conviction.

"Perhaps so," the other replied, absently.

"She's pretty; did you notice what splendid dark eyes she has?"

"Eyes?—oh, yes!" The colonel was answering like a man in a dream.

"What on earth is the matter with you, colonel?" exclaimed the young man, in astonishment.

"Oh, nothing," and with a great effort, the Southerner roused himself from his abstraction. "So you think that young lady is the one who is going to take your uncle's fortune from you?"

"Yes."

"Well, of course I can't say whether she is the daughter or not; but, if she is, you give me a note for five thousand dollars, payable when you come into your uncle's property, and I'll agree to remove this girl from your way."

"You wouldn't attempt any violence?"

"My dear boy, I am a gentleman, I trust. I shall use only the strong arm of the law. Is it a bargain?"

"Yes." The compact was made.

CHAPTER IX.

LILL'S PROTECTOR.

THE detective and Lill were shown into the parlor by the servant, who then went in quest of Mr. Olkoff.

Lill looked around her in astonishment. Never in all her life had she seen such handsome furniture, such splendid paintings; such evidences of wealth and luxury.

Peters, with a quiet smile upon his shrewd face, watched the girl as her eyes wandered in wonder around the room.

"Well, Lill, this isn't much like the Bowery, is it?" he asked.

"Not much, you—oh! I forgot!" and the girl put her hand to her mouth in great confusion. "I forgot that I said that I wouldn't say those words any more. It's hard work to remember, but I will, though."

Peters laughed at the frank confession.

"But, what do you think of this place?"

"Oh! it's beautiful!" the girl replied, an earnest expression upon her face. "I used to dream of just such a place as this, often, when I've gone to sleep in a doorway. But I never thought that there was any such nice places in New York; it seems like fairy land."

"This is dead earnest?"

"Yes; I've often wondered when I've seen the ladies riding in their carriages, all

dressed up in silks and velvets, what kind of places they had to live in, and whether they eat off of gold and silver dishes or not. But it always seemed to me as if they belonged to a different world from the one I lived in."

The entrance of Mr. Olkoff put an end to the speech of the girl.

Peters rose and introduced Lill.

There was a strange look upon the face of the old merchant as he looked upon the girl—a peculiar light in his eye that few in this world had ever seen there before.

Long and earnestly he looked upon the girl.

"Do you remember me?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," she replied.

"How would you like to come here and live with me—be my daughter?" he said, his voice kind and gentle.

"If he wants me to," Lill replied, looking at the detective.

Olkoff turned to Peters, in astonishment, at the abrupt sentence.

"You see, sir, this young lady looks upon me as a sort of protector," Peters explained.

I came into the saloon, which has been her home, at quite a critical time last night. Two roughs were about to assault her. My sudden appearance saved her from them, and she has taken it into her head to consider herself a sort of ward of mine. I have explained to her, as well as I could with the slight knowledge I possessed, what your intentions are, and she is perfectly willing to do as I say."

"Yes; if he says I must stop, I will," said Lill, frankly.

"Understand," the merchant said. "I take a very strong interest in you, my girl. You do not seem like a stranger to me, because you are the perfect image of one whom I knew a very long time ago. That one I am sure was your mother."

"What was her name?" asked Lill, suddenly.

"Louise."

"That was my mother's name!" cried the girl. "I know, 'cos Jocky's wife told me so, once."

"Jocky?" questioned Olkoff.

Peters explained who Jocky was, and gave the merchant a brief account of the life that the girl was leading when he had found her.

"It is as I thought; you are her child. Your mother was a very dear friend of mine, and for her sake, I wish to have the right to take care of you for the future. What do you say? Do you think that you could be happy here with me?"

"Ask him," Lill replied, pointing to the detective.

"She has great faith in you," Olkoff said to Peters, smiling.

"Oh, yes," the detective replied, rather embarrassed by the strong partiality evinced by the girl.

"Then, Mr. Peters, I must apply to you."

"I'm perfectly willing, sir. I've already told Miss Lillian—that's her name, sir—that you will take good care of her."

"Yes, if this gentleman is willing, you are," the merchant asked, addressing Lill.

"Then, sir," Lill replied, slowly, "but, sir, if I come to live with you, I won't see this gentleman any more, will I?"

And there was an anxious look upon the girl's face as she put the question.

"Certainly you will," Olkoff replied; "he can call to see you whenever you wish him to."

"You see, sir, he's the only friend I've got in the world, and I've only just got him, and I don't want to go back on him so soon," Lill said, earnestly. And as she looked at Peters' face, she saw the smile there that her odd expression had called forth.

"There!" she cried, petulantly. "I've gone and said something that I hadn't ought to. He's a-tryin' to tell me, sir, how to speak properly, but I'm such a stupid head, I'll never learn."

Lill's tone was one of thorough despair. Olkoff laughed. "The innocence of the girl pleased him."

"Oh, you will learn in time, my dear; you mustn't be impatient. And as this gentleman has commenced to teach you, suppose we arrange to have him come here two or three times a week, and so continue his lessons?"

The eyes of Lill sparkled with delight at the idea.

"Will that please you?" Olkoff asked, though he plainly perceived the joy of the girl in her face.

"Oh, yes, sir! ever so much!" she exclaimed.

So it was arranged that every Wednesday and Saturday the detective was to call and spend the afternoon with Lill.

Peters then took his departure, much to the regret of the girl, whose dark eyes filled with tears as she shook hands with him in the hall.

"Good-by," she murmured; "don't you forget me; I shan't forget you. It's very hard to be a good girl, and remember what you told me about saying those ugly words." Then she glanced carefully around her, as if seeking to discover whether they were observed or not. But no one was in sight. Olkoff had discreetly remained in the parlor. Peters noticed the look and wondered at it.

"You won't be angry?" she asked, slowly, with downcast eyes.

"Angry at what?" exclaimed the detective, in astonishment.

Again the girl glanced around her; then, timidly, she came close to the detective, put her plump arms around his neck and held up her lips.

The detective laughed and kissed the little mouth.

"You poor child!" he said, caressingly patting her cheek.

"You are the only friend that I have ever had, and if you hadn't kissed me before you went away, I should have felt so bad."

"Good-by, again. I'll come Saturday."

And the next instant the door closed behind the officer.

Lill returned to the parlor, and seating herself by the side of the old merchant at his request, she related to him the simple story of her life.

Olkoff listened attentively. He watched the face of the girl as she spoke. There was a restless, vacant expression upon it which did not escape his attention. Nor was he long in doubt as to the cause of the look. The girl missed her protector. In the presence of Peters she seemed to be a different being.

Skilfully, Olkoff turned the conversation, and spoke of the officer.

The moment she began to speak of him, and relate how he had rescued her from persecutors, in the underground saloon, her whole manner changed. The warm blood flushed her cheeks; her eyes sparkled, and

her voice was earnest as she told of the deeds of the man, who was a hero in her eyes.

A peculiar look came over the face of the old man. It was not noticed by the girl, whose eyes, fixed on vacancy, saw, in imagination, the face of the one who had befriended her.

"Confound it!" the merchant muttered to himself, as the girl finished her story. "I see I shall have to adopt the detective officer also. The girl will never be satisfied without him, in this world."

The shrewd guess of the old man was correct. The detective was all the world to the girl whom he had rescued from misery.

Leaving the girl to wonder at the splendor that surrounded her, and the old merchant to become more and more interested in the wait that he had transplanted from the squalid misery of the streets to the hot-house life of the parlor, we will follow the officer.

Strange thoughts were passing through his mind as he slowly descended the steps that led to the sidewalk.

The rich perfume of Lill's warm kiss was yet lingering on his lips; still—in imagination—he felt the soft pressure of the plump, white arms around his neck. Memories of bygone days came back to him. Again he was a lad, standing in the staid old Vermont village. Again he heard the whirr of the spindles that gave life to the little hamlet. Again he looked in the coquettish blue eyes of the only girl he had ever loved, and heard her calmly say that all was over between them.

At last came over the clear, cold eyes of the detective, as he thought of his boyish days—thought how he had once loved—how, despairing, he had left the quiet country village, and plunged into the bustle of the overgrown metropolis.

"It's strange! What brought Debby Stark into my mind?" he muttered, as he walked along the street, deep in meditation.

"Debby was a pretty girl, but she wasn't for me."

Then the detective turned the corner of the street, and, as he did so, he raised his eyes. Across the street he beheld the boot-black, Shrimpy, gesticulating wildly to him.

Peters looked at the boy in astonishment. "What does he want, I wonder?" he exclaimed.

The boy ran across the street, and approached Peters, with a beaming smile on his dirty face.

"How are you, boss? Got something 'clever to tell you," the boy said, mysteriously.

"Spit it out," Peters replied, impatiently.

"I don't want 'em for to see me a-talkin' with you, or they'd chaw my ear right off!" cried the boy.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 65.)

The Winged Whale: OR, THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE," "WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI. A FRIEND IN NEED.

FROM THE DARKNESS, into the bright circle of light that the lantern dimly cast, stepped the tall form of the Indian chief.

The snake with three tails.

Rupert and Isabel looked upon him with surprise. How he had gained entrance to the prison-cell passed their comprehension. He had evidently not entered by the door, for he advanced from the opposite side of the room.

The sailor recognized the chief at once, and knew him for a friend. Isabel, still clinging fondly to her lover's breast, looked upon the Indian with surprise.

"The red chief is glad to see his brother," said the savage, placing his hand upon his heart.

"How gained you entrance here, chief?" asked Rupert, in surprise.

"Wah! Indian has long memory—never forgets. Hole in big wigwam there," and the savage pointed to the dark corner from whence he had come. "Many moons ago the red chief knew the wigwams of Pensacola as he knows the paths in the forest of his nation. He remembered the hole in the floor of the big wigwam. His white brother is in the snare of the long-knives—red man take him out—it is good."

"You come to save me then?" Rupert asked, eagerly.

"The red chief has said," replied the savage, with grave dignity.

"You see the chance of escape has come," Rupert said, softly, to Isabel.

"Yes," she murmured, in reply, with downcast eyes.

"And you have spoken words that say we must separate forever," the sailor added, sadly. "Oh, Isabel, I would not have believed you false, even though all the world had sworn it. I have faith in the pure love of a true woman; faith that I thought nothing in this world could shake; but your words have proved to me that my confidence was rash, my judgment wrong."

Rupert, then, and Isabel faltered in her speech; again the tear-drops filled her eyes and she hid her face on the breast of the sailor, her bosom heaving tumultuously with suppressed emotion.

"Isabel, recall your cruel words; tell me once again that you love me, and by the assurance make me blessed forever!" pleaded Rupert, lowly, but passionately.

"I—I can not!" she murmured, a sob choking her voice.

"You are false to your word, then?"

After a minute's pause, as though the girl was striving to find strength to speak, the answer came.

"Yes."

"Isabel, with that one little word you have banished all the happiness of my life forever," Rupert said, sadly.

"Hear the red-man speak," said the Indian, suddenly. His keen hearing had heard every word of the conversation between the two, although it had been conducted in whispers.

In astonishment, Rupert and Isabel looked upon the chief.

"When the white flower says that she does not love the great salt lake chief, the Great Spirit above covers his face in sorrow, for she speaks with a forked tongue. Let my brother open his ears. He shall hear words that will light up his heart as the sun lights up the forest glade when it breaks through the angry clouds and bids them fly."

"Speak!" cried Rupert, eagerly. The words of the savage told of hope and joy.

"Like a snake, the red chief crawled in the grass and followed on the trail of the big sachem of the long-knives," said the savage, slowly.

"You mean the commandante, Don Alvarado?"

"Yes," replied the Indian, to Rupert's question. "The red-man followed the big chief till he entered his wigwam. He waited outside and watched in the grass. He saw the white chief appear at one of the windows of the lodge wherein a light burned. The red chief crawled like a snake up a tree that grew by the window. In the big wigwam was the white chief and the white flower." The Indian pointed to Isabel as he spoke. "The ears of the red-man were open—he heard all."

"Ah," and Isabel again hid her face on Rupert's breast. She guessed what the chief was about to say.

The big chief of the long-knives told the white flower that he held the salt lake chief as the snake that he holds the bird. His life was at the mercy of the big chief—he had but to raise his hand and the captive would go to the happy hunting-grounds. The white flower begged for the life of the warrior that she loved. The big chief granted it on one condition.

"And that condition?" cried Rupert, eagerly, as the savage paused. The sailor guessed it, and as he put the question he held the girl still closer to his breast.

"If the white flower would go to the captive's wigwam," say to him that she loved him no longer, and could never come and sing in his wigwam, the big chief would spare his life and he could go free. The white flower consented—the long-knife made her swear that she would not reveal to her brave the promise that she had given."

All now was clear to Rupert. He saw the subtle plan of the wily Spaniard. He saw, too, how truly and deeply Isabel loved him.

"Isabel," he said, softly, "this then is the reason why you have spoken so cruelly. To save my life you were willing to sacrifice your love. You are an angel of goodness. But now, Isabel, now that I know the truth you will not persevere in the course that this dark villain marked out for you. The truth is known to me. You are released from your vow. Know, too, Isabel, that even were I led out for execution, the muskets pointed at my breast, I would not accept of life brought by such a sacrifice. The conditions under which you gave the pledge no longer exist. Then I was a helpless prisoner, no way of escape open to me, death certain, my life existing only on the slender thread of the commandante's will. All is changed now. Thanks to my friend here, escape is easy, and once free from these walls, safety awaits me. I can laugh to scorn the power of the commandante and all the Spaniards at his back."

"But I promised—," murmured Isabel.

"And your vow to me does that count for nothing, dear one?" Rupert asked, softly. "Which will you break, the first vow or the last?"

"The last!" she replied, quickly.

"Joy then awaits me," said Rupert, his face beaming and his glance high.

"But, whither will you fly?" questioned the girl. "The moment your escape is discovered, they will follow you at once. The commandante has many soldiers and they will not hesitate to execute his orders, no matter how cruel they may be."

"Isabel, on the waters of yonder bay floats a gallant brigantine that calls me master; a hundred brave hearts man her deck, not one of whom but will cheerfully follow me, even unto death. You remember the bayou where we sought refuge the other night, when the soldiers, headed by this Captain Estevan, chased us down the bay; where we landed, got the horses, by means of which we were able to get back to the city before our pursuers?"

"Yes."

"My craft lies concealed in that bayou. There I will seek refuge; and, Isabel, will I ask too much, if I beg of you to go with me?"

"Did I not promise it?" she replied, question for question. "No longer the tear-drops bedewed her cheeks; the radiant flush of joy once more shone upon her features."

"You will go then?"

"Yes."

"And we will depart and leave these shores forever."

"But, Rupert, one question."

"What is it?"

"The commandante tried to shake my faith in you. He told me that you were—I can not bear to utter the terrible words," she said, in confusion.

"He told you that I was Lafitte, the pirate?" the sailor said, calmly.

"Yes."

"And did you believe him?"

"No," he said; "your hand was red with blood; your soul stained with crime. I could not believe it; to me you will ever be, Rupert, the playmate of my childhood, the savior of my life, the man to whom I have given my love," replied Isabel, her eyes full of trust and love.

"Whether I am only Rupert, as you know me, or Lafitte, the 'Terror of the Gulf,' as the Spaniards say, I can freely swear to you that I am innocent of crime. True, men have fallen by my hand, the guns of my vessel have lowered many a flag on the high seas, but it was done in fair and open fight. Believe me, no act of mine in the past will disgrace the woman who is willing to trust her future life unto my care."

"I do believe your words, and give myself to you freely," the girl replied.

"When the white chief is ready, his red brother will lead the way," said the Indian.

The white man will try to pay his brother for this service if it shall ever be in his power to do so," exclaimed Rupert, earnestly.

"White flower go, too?" asked the Indian, as he moved to the trap-door, which was in the corner by the wall. He noticed that Rupert and the girl followed him.

"Yes; soon she will be my wife," Rupert replied.

"It is good," replied the Indian.

The chief lifted up the trap-door. The heavy deposit of dust, which had hid the line of the trap from view, proved how long it had been since the door had been used.

The three descended; the top closed and the prison cell was deserted.

The soldier on guard, Roque Vasca, waited a reasonable time for the return of the girl, and then he began to grow impatient.

"Volo a brios!" he muttered; "she's a long time taking leave of this gallant. By the

beard of my grandfather, there's no woman in the world that would take the trouble to come and say 'good-by' to me, if I was as near the other world as this heretic is. I wonder who the commandante will give his clothes to? It's a brave jacket of velvet he has, with its silver buttons. I must make an early application to be the American's heir."

moodyly; "our prey has escaped us, and taken the girl with him, too."

"They can not have proceeded far. We will proceed to search for them at once."

The three left the shed and hastened to the barracks occupied by the soldiers. Hardly had they reached their destination, when a horseman dashed into the yard. The sides of the steed were white with foam, and his heaving flanks told of headlong speed.

The rider recognized the Spanish officer, and almost tumbled out of his saddle in his haste to dismount.

"Oh, señor!" the man cried, breathlessly. The Spaniard recognized the exhausted rider. He was the proprietor of a plantation on the Perito.

"Well, señor?" demanded the commandante, unable to guess the cause of the alarm of the stranger.

"The Americans!" the horseman gasped.

"Ah!" The commandante started. He scented danger in the air.

"On the march hither—an army, señor—horse, foot and artillery!" continued the man, in breathless haste.

"On the march hither?" questioned the officer, in amazement.

"Yes, señor, under General Jackson. The forces come from New Orleans, and they are marching straight for Pensacola. They crossed the river and encamped on my plantation; I learned the object of the expedition and took horse at once to warn you."

"Thanks, señor, you have performed a great service," said the commandante, courteously.

"Roque, see that the señor and his horse are both attended to. Excuse me, señor; I must attend to this matter."

The commandante and his son proceeded at once to the quarters of the former.

"What is the meaning of this movement on the part of the Americans, father?" asked Estevan.

"I have expected an attack for some time," the commandante replied, thoughtfully.

"You remember the British man-of-war that put into our port and landed the agents who sought to stir up the Indians, and induce them to take sides against the Americans?"

"The 'Shannon'?" "Yes."

"By some means, I know not how, the news of that affair reached General Jackson, who commands the American forces at New Orleans. Through my spies in that city, I have been informed that the American General threatened to attack Pensacola, claiming that we have forfeited our right to be classed as neutrals by affording aid and succor to the English."

"A war, then, is upon us?"

"Yes, and we are ill-prepared to meet it," the commandante said, thoughtfully.

"We have but three hundred men in the garrison, and our artillery is almost worthless."

"But it can not be possible that the American General leads his whole force against us. That would leave New Orleans unguarded, and the English commanders have been threatening to attack the city for some time."

"It is probably only a division of cavalry, although our messenger spoke of artillery," the commandante said.

"We must not place too great a reliance upon his words; he is evidently thoroughly frightened."

"If it is only a cavalry squadron, we can laugh at them from behind the walls of the fort. And, even if they have artillery, it can not consist of any thing but light field-pieces."

"Worth but little against our ramparts," Estevan said.

"True; and I do not think that the Americans will attempt to storm the fort. With three hundred men, and our artillery, bad as it is, we can hold it against two thousand soldiers, unless they are provided with siege guns, to batter down our walls."

"We'll fight them to the last, then?"

"It is useless to deny the truth; when the truth is known—we have aided the English in their war upon the Americans. We must meet the consequences, let them be what they may."

By this time the two had reached the house of the commandante. A man habited as a fisherman had just approached them. It was the Spaniard called Pablo, who figured in the opening chapter of our story.

The fisherman doffed his cap respectfully as he approached the two officers.

"Parion, señores," he said, "but I have something to tell you that perhaps you would like to hear."

"What is it?" asked the commandante, a touch of impatience in his voice.

"The señorita Isabel."

"Ah!" cried both the Spaniards, in a breath. They were all attention now.

"As I sat by my boat on the beach, a strange stranger came up to me and asked me for the loan of my boat for a sail. As he offered me a gold-piece, I readily consented. He got in and sailed off a little way, then returned and landed on the beach nearer to the city. From behind my hut I watched him. The señorita Isabel came down to the beach, got into the boat, and then they put to sea. I watched, until I lost them in the gloom of the night. Then I suddenly thought that, perhaps, something was wrong, and that it would be as well that you should know what the señorita had done as to be in ignorance of it—so I thought I'd come and tell you what I have seen."

"You are an honest fellow!" cried Estevan, quickly; "here is a gold-piece for your pains."

With many a bow the fisherman withdrew.

"What is to be done, father?"

"I do not know," replied the commandante, a strange expression upon his face.

"Twas the American, of course, who took the boat. I know the haunt that he is making for the other night, but, by some devilish jugglery, he raised an awful form from out the dark waters, and froze the courage of my men. Do you not see the game of this fellow? It is probable that he has a score or more of his pirates secreted in the woods that fringe this lagoon—his lurking place. He will wait there till Jackson advances; then, under the protection of the soldiers, Isabel is lost to us forever."

"What do you propose to do?" asked the father.

"Give me fifty of our men. I will take the coasting schooner that now lies in port, mount a piece of artillery on her, proceed to this bayou, and hunt these reptiles from their holes. I'll attack them early in the morning."

"Be it so—you shall have the soldiers; but, as you value your soul, do not harm this Rupert," said the commandante, solemnly.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 51.)

THE CAT-A-STROPHE.

BY LEPIDUS.

Think you that man alone can battles fight, And cause great hosts to fall before his might? Think you for him alone the field grows red, And thickly scattered over with the dead? Be not deceived; my simple tale review: Such thoughts will vanish ere you read it through.

'Twas once in Erin's isle, the feline race, Resolved on conflict, gathered to one place. Kilkenny? Yes, Kilkenny was the spot. Round which they gathered and at which they fought.

From town and country, whether near or far, From Wexford Harbor even to Castletar, With one accord they hastened to the fray. And where 'twas narrow, often blocked the way.

The lame, the halt, the blind, the wild, the tame, The black, the white, and every color tame, Some, raised in case, had never learned to fight. And some were there that practiced every night.

Soon, face to face, in two long lines they form, "Still as the breeze yet dreadful as the storm."

And as the storm-cloud, rising in its course, Shoots fiery bolts, and mottled thunders hoarse, So flashed their eyes at their opposing foes, And threatening growls along the lines arose.

And as the oak before the storm-wind quails, And shakes from side to side, so shook their tails. Their mighty leaders, bravest of their race, With stately step along the lines did pace.

Then, glaring in deadly wrath from side to side, "Hear us, ye braves! Advance, advance!" they cried.

Oh, then, how raged the angry battle there! And, oh, what cries terrific rent the air! Both young and old in one strange war combine, And every color fills the seething line.

Relentless Jove upon his chariot flew, And flung his bolts among the raging crew. And pallid Death on every hillock sat, And grined and gloated on the dying cat.

Oh, dread is battle when to us 'tis given, To view it pictured in the vaults of heaven! But still more dreadful when it sweeps below, And fills the world with sorrow, dear and woe!

As sulphur smoke o'er common battle-ground, With ominous shadow, darkens all around, So did the fur high over the conflict rise, And hide the sun, and darken all the skies.

And as the mist round Erin's rocky coast, Rests on the breeze and on the land is tossed, So did the feline clouds three long days remain, O'er all the land from Bantry to Strabane.

And as the cracking flames devour the town, Then dying out, no house nor flame is found, So raged the conflict, and so passed away The mad combats from the bustling fray.

Say, lone alone—the bravest of them all— Did mourn his friends, and joy his enemies' fall. Then, wrapped in thought, "Should I rejoice?" he said.

"Although I've conquered, yet my race is dead; Friends that should praise, with foes have passed from sight."

I'm now more wretched than before the fight. Oh, cruel War! what tears, what blood, what woe Mark thy dread path, and from thy triumphs flow! What is thy victory but the crimsoned plain! And what thy glory but the mangled slain!

To war is vain, though victor in the strife; I'll seek my home and lead a peaceful life.

In the Web:

THE GIRL-WIFE'S TRIALS.

A HEARTY AND LIFE ROMANCE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY EDWIN SOUTH.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MISSING LINK.

THE Brazos was the third day out from Vera Cruz, and the weather was, and had been, mild and beautiful. The sun was dropping slowly into the distant waves to the westward, and the warm breath of the dying day came over the waters from the south in fitful puffs. The whole sky was aglow with a scarlet beauty which was reflected in the clear waters of the Gulf, tipping the billows with fringes of crimson, and striking the wide-spread sails of the Brazos with a flood of light so dazzling as to make them appear almost transparent.

On the deck walked Graham Cecil and Robert Maynard, engaged in earnest conversation. At length the former said:

"I will call Dr. Gibson, and ask him his opinion of her."

"I wish you would," answered the old man. "I am exceedingly anxious, as you may well guess. Thavescarce slept a whole hour since I have been aboard. To tell you the truth, I have watched by her bedside every night while she slept."

"This is too much. You must exercise more care, or your own health will give way. But, stay—here comes the doctor."

The person who advanced, and acknowledged this title, was a large, heavily-built man, of thirty-five, or thereabouts. His face was rosy with the hue of perfect health; his eyes were large, bright and blue, and his chin and upper lip were covered with a wealth of rippling brownish beard, which made him look positively handsome. He was an American physician of means, whose home was in Mississippi, but who had been traveling in Mexico, partly for pleasure and partly on business. He had made the acquaintance of Major Cecil in Monterey, and they had arranged to travel in company as far as Galveston. When, however, Graham Cecil brought Tillie Blanchard and her father aboard the Brazos, Doctor Gibson volunteered at once to take the invalid under his care, feeling confident that he could soon restore her to reason.

She seemed to like him from the start, and submitted to his treatment with a child-like obedience. "All she needs is rest and quiet," he said, after the first day, and now, on the third, she was able to talk quite rationally about many things, although, when her mind rested upon her husband, she grew wild, and "wanted to die, too," as she expressed it.

Dr. Gibson knew the query that was upon Graham Cecil's tongue, as he took the hand of the latter; and, before it could be put into words, the doctor said, in his light, easy way:

"Anxious about my patient, eh?"

"Yes, indeed; very anxious," replied the old man.

"Well, she ain't going to die."

"But her reason?"

"Will be as sound as yours before we reach Galveston."

"Do you really think so?" put in Major Cecil, wringing the doctor's hand.

"Do I think so? Yes—I more than think so—I know so."

"But, doctor, this cure is so sudden," said Cecil.

"Well?"

"Well—of course you ought to know, but really, I was under the impression that it took a long and wearisome course of treatment to effect a cure in such cases."

"In what cases?"

"Well, in cases of insanity."

"That depends altogether on the nature of the disease which produced mental aberration. This has been the result of a shock—a sudden, terrible nervous shock. It is rare, in such cases, for the reason to be permanently disordered. It is the easiest of all cases to cure. Would you believe it—my patient and I have just had a long and very sensible chat."

"You are serious, doctor?"

"Never more so in my life."

"Thank God!" was the fervid exclamation of Robert Maynard, as he clasped Dr. Gibson's hand, and then, hastily dropping it, he rushed toward the companion-way.

"Where is he going?" asked the doctor.

"To see his daughter, I presume," answered Cecil.

"Oh, he must not do that. He will undo all I have done, if he disturbs her now."

He called the old man back, and proceeded to inform him of the necessity there was for quiet in the sick-chamber, and that, for a day or two yet, it was necessary that he himself should have sole charge of her.

"You see, she is very weak yet, and needs a great deal of care and attention. The stewardess and I will manage this business nicely, if you will only permit us."

Reluctantly the old gentleman consented, saying by way of apology:

"You see, gentlemen, it's pretty hard to be separated again, even for four or five days."

After an hour upon deck, the three separated, Major Cecil going to his state-room, the doctor to his patient, while Robert Maynard continued to walk the deck.

Presently he was joined by Captain Broderick, who was familiarly called "The Skipper of the Brazos."

"Well, sir," he said, "are you prepared for a little blow?"

"A blow?"

"Yes—a regular soft-easter."

"I can't say that I am. You surely don't anticipate a storm, captain?"

"Well, I can't say I anticipate, but that warm puff of wind smells bad, that's all."

"Smells bad?"

"Not exactly; but that's a word of ours which serves to mean that there is something ugly in the wind. Were you never in a blow?"

"Not at sea, sir," replied Maynard, lifting his cap and permitting the warm breeze to lift his gray locks. "I have experienced considerable tough weather on the Cumberland, though."

Captain Broderick laughed a dry laugh, and said:

"I am of the opinion you have never seen any thing to equal a blow in the Gulf. Why, my dear sir, I have almost seen the keel of the Brazos; and the night the Creole Belle went down under my feet, I never expected to see the old Lone Star State again. I tell you, my friend, that was a nipper! But I didn't go under. Suppose the time for passing in my clasp hadn't come yet?"

"How did you escape?"

"Why, you see, after all the passengers had left the old Belle but two, and there was no person about but Gils Rye, my first mate, I took a long look around the deck. You mayn't want to believe me, but it's true as preaching, I never felt so bad in my life as I did then. It seemed so familiar, the old craft did, and we had known each other so long; had seen sunshine and tempest together; had been in mighty tough places, too, that I began to recognize every plank and rafter as an old chum, and, by gracious me, sir, I forgot the Belle was a-going to the bottom for a minute, and might have forgotten altogether, only for an old man who stood close by, and who was one of the passengers I spoke of. Says he, 'Captain, she's going, and we had better be trying to save ourselves, afore it's too late.' With that, I looked around and saw that she was settling astern, awful fast. Wiping my eyes for there was tears in 'em for the poor old Belle—I ordered a small raft we had fixed up to be launched. Five minutes after we were all aboard, and in ten minutes more I saw the last spar of the Creole Belle go under."

The seaman heaved a deep sigh, as if the memory of the Creole Belle was very sad to him; yet, and, turning to Maynard, he continued:

"You think it sorter odd to hear a fellow talk that way about a craft, don't you?"

"Yes, rather odd. But how did you come out on the raft?"

"You mean how did we reach shore?"

"Yes."

"Well, sir, we were three whole days a-logging about there, and our provisions had all gone, and hunger and thirst was doing their worst for us. Just before daylight, on the third night, that old man what had told me to hurry off the Belle crept up to me, and said, in a sorter whisper like: 'Captain, I don't think I can hold out much longer. I'm pretty much used up, but I want to tell you something before I go, so that you can, if you get to land, do me a great service. 'Well,' said I, 'spin your yarn, and if I can assist you in any way, I'll do it.'"

"Was it stormy then?" asked Maynard.

"No, the sea was as calm as a sleeping baby. Perhaps you wouldn't care for hearing that old fellow's story; would you?"

"Yes, if you don't consider it too much trouble to tell it."

"I never think any thing a trouble."

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"Well, sir, we were three whole days a-logging about there, and our provisions had all gone, and hunger and thirst was doing their worst for us. Just before daylight, on the third night, that old man what had told me to hurry off the Belle crept up to me, and said, in a sorter whisper like: 'Captain, I don't think I can hold out much longer. I'm pretty much used up, but I want to tell you something before I go, so that you can, if you get to land, do me a great service. 'Well,' said I, 'spin your yarn, and if I can assist you in any way, I'll do it.'"

"Was it stormy then?" asked Maynard.

"No, the sea was as calm as a sleeping baby. Perhaps you wouldn't care for hearing that old fellow's story; would you?"

"Yes, if you don't consider it too much trouble to tell it."

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MR. AIKEN'S NEW SERIAL.

OVERLAND KIT;

OR,

The Idyl of White Pine.

It is with great pleasure that we announce another romance from the pen of Mr. Albert W. Aiken, undisputedly the most brilliant of all our American authors, and one whose popularity among THE PEOPLE increases with each story that he writes.

The scene of OVERLAND KIT is located among the mines of the famous White Pine region. The mining camp of Spur City, will be readily recognized by any White-Pinite, though disguised by a fictitious appellation.

The romance is a weird and wild tale—founded on fact—of the mining region. It is pervaded by the balm of the resinous pines, swaying in the breeze cooled by the white peaks of the rocky Sierras.

The characters are strange enough, but all are drawn true to nature. OVERLAND KIT, from whom the story takes its title, is a reckless "Road Agent"—as the miners call the highwaymen-like gentlemen who relieve the overland coaches of their gold dust. But, contrary to their usual custom, his face is covered by a mask, and there are rumors that the Road Agent is a man of high position in the territory. Then we have "Ginger Bill," so called from his huge red beard—the driver of the coach, a true Western character, full of old sayings, smacking of dry humor; "Dick Talbot," the man who gets his living by playing cards—the only man in Spur City who wears a white shirt—who is called by some "Gentleman Dick," by others, "Injun Dick"—the best two-handed sparrer, the cutest wrestler, the keenest shot and the coolest hand in all the Reese river valley—a man tarred with the brush of evil, yet possessing many virtues; "Dandy Jim," the man from Red Dog, the comical, bulky, who "carrots" round—who is "half sea-lion and half grizzly bear"; Solomon Bennett, the old New York lawyer and his unprincipled son, who scheme for the fortune of the wealthy orphan, Bernice Gwynn, who, under the protection of the old lawyer, visits the mining region, in quest of the wild youth who fled from New York, to evade the law's stern grasp, ten years before; and last, though not least among the prominent characters of this unique life romance, comes Jimmie Johnson, "the gal who runs the Eldorado saloon," the wife of the mines; whose red-gold hair and cool, gray eyes, possess wondrous fascinations.

In the story, the working of the terrible "Vigilantes" is fully described; also the lynch trial, in which the representatives from "Paddy's Flat" and "Gopher Gulch," rival mining camps, figure prominently. OVERLAND KIT will create a great sensation. It is the truest picture of border life that has ever been written.

Foolscap Papers.

Mary's Lamb.

WHEN Napoleon Bonaparte, the great English dramatic poet, wrote the celebrated poem of Mary's Lamb, it was under the inspiration of evanescent mutton-chops. I don't pretend to say that he might not have done worse; nor that he could have done better; nor that he did not write it at all, for he did greater things than that. The poem is simple, effective and sublime. Let us look at it critically.

"Mary had a little lamb."

It is evident that the animal was small by the use of the word "little"; if it was big, the poet would not have said little, or if it was big, and he said it was little, then he lied, and should have his poetic license revoked forthwith.

We also read that it was a lamb, therefore we know it was not a pig, a calf, or any thing else. If it was not a lamb, then the poet has subjected himself to be doubted as a correct chronicler. He fails to say what breed the lamb belonged to—whether it was a Merino, South-Down, Shaggy, or a battering-ram lamb. This part is left to the imagination, as is most proper, for we must not expect poets to tell all things.

"Its fleece was white as snow."

This is a pure line—snow being indicative of purity. If it had been a black lamb, and our poet willfully said it was white, his reputation should suffer to the fullest extent of the law.

"And everywhere that Mary went"

We see that Mary was not a stay-at-home girl, if our poet is to be believed, and that wherever she went the lamb was sure to go, and never failed, or the words "sure" and "everywhere" would not have been used.

"It went with her to school one day."

We infer from this that it was no night school which Mary attended, for it reads "one day," and night is a different thing from day on account of the absence of the sun.

"Which was against the rule."

The constitution of that school expressly declaring that "no animals of the lamb persuasion can possibly be eligible to scholarships and seats in this institution." A good rule, to be sure.

"It made the children laugh and play"

From these lines we discover that children went to this school, and from their mirth we judge that that was the first time they ever got lambled in that kind of way, although they were perfectly familiar with the other kind of lam.

"And so the teacher turned him out."

We perceive there was a teacher at this school, but the poet neglects to state how much a month and board his salary was; nor does he sing whether he turned him a summerset out or not, but it is probable.

"But, still he lingered near,
And waited patiently about
Till Mary did appear."

It is very evident that the lamb didn't run home and make a great fuss over his expulsion, from the fact that he lingered near; probably he sat on the steps or on the fence, waiting, with patience, till Mary would come out, which he knew she would do about twelve o'clock, if his watch was right.

"And then he ran to her—"

Not to upset her calculations, as many a little girl would have feared, but to lay his head upon her arm.

"As if to say I'm not afraid of that bald-headed schoolmaster,
You'll keep me from all harm."

Expressive of great confidence in Mary. You see, the poet does not say the lamb actually did utter these words, for he says as if to say. The words as if altering or preventing what would be one of the most remarkable cases on record since the days of Balaam's rabbit.

"What makes the lamb love Mary so?"
The eager children say."

What is curious here is that the children couldn't ask this question without crying, though it really is an affecting question.

"Oh, Mary loves the lamb, you know,"
The teacher did reply."

Hence it was a case of mutual affection, although it may be inferred that the lamb never told its love.

But, with what a Miltonic moral does the last verse shine.

"Now, you each gentle animal
To you for life can bind,
And make it follow at your call,
If you are only kind."

Think of it, little girls and boys, what a nice thing it would be for you to be kind to snakes, turkey-buzzards, bad-frogs and bed-bugs, and have them follow you to school and every place else! Oh, it would be joyful. Try it!

What became of this celebrated little lamb the poet does not state; but, it is very probable that some hard-hearted butcher, with no poetry in him, resolved his historical body into matter of fact mutton, years and years ago, and its spirit passed to its lamb-kindred.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

THIS world runs to extremes. A man in a moment of passion strikes a fatal blow; he takes the life which the Creator gave and which only He should destroy.

Then up on the wind rises the howl for blood. The newspapers, ever ready to pandor to public opinion—which they are supposed to lead, but which, in reality, they control about as much as the weathercock does the wind—take up the cry, blood! Speedy justice! strike terror to the hearts of evil-doers! These, and a hundred other phrases of like meaning, fill their columns.

The trial is rushed through; the man convicted and hung; a second life follows the first, and justice is satisfied. Men breathe easier.

"This will be a warning—how we shall be safer—rogues will be careful."

A false assumption, when applied to capital punishment.

A man may commit murder in two different ways, as regards his state of mind. In one, he coolly plans the deed; counts the cost, the gain thereby, and the risk of detection; fancies that he can escape the consequences, and, with the full knowledge of the foulness of the act, completes the deed.

This is deliberate, willful murder. In the other, in a moment of passion, when his brain, perhaps, is maddened by the fumes of liquor—the soul-destroying passion, which has more evil deeds to answer for than any thing else in this world—he strikes a blow, that results fatally. Perhaps, at the very moment, too, he is smarting under the sense of a real or fancied injury.

This is manslaughter.

Suppose we hang both of these men, administer capital punishment, do we really increase the security of the citizens at large?

The hanging is supposed to be a warning; but, is it? Does it produce the desired effect?

Will the cool, calculating wretch who plans his crime, knowing that the gallows awaits him if he is detected, hesitate because there has been one or ten men hung for a similar act? No, he trusts to his shrewdness to escape detection.

Will the other, his brain heated by anger, pause to reflect that there was a man hung yesterday because he killed another? No; if he reflected at all, he would not commit the assault.

We think that any unprejudiced person will admit that neither of these two classes of murderers will be restrained by the fear of capital punishment. The one great argument, then, in favor of it—that it will lessen crime, by terrible example—falls at once to the ground.

There is a third class of desperadoes, whose natures are as brutal as beasts of prey, that we have not yet mentioned. Men who are reckless, desperate; who apparently kill for the mere pleasure of killing; who, on the scaffold, "die game," the Jack Sheppard class. It is not likely that the fear of hanging will have much influence in restraining the hands of such brutes.

Where, then, the need of capital punishment?

Where is the higher law that gives the right to take human life, whether with the bludgeon of the ruffian or the rope of the hangman?

The human who commits a crime is, up to a certain extent, a maniac. Shut him up from the world; keep him from his fellow-creatures; but take not the life, which, with all the great great world's genius, we have never yet learned how to create.

"Blood for blood" is a bad cry; it brutalizes the world.

Human nature is weak; swayed sometimes by the worst of passions, but, in the stings of conscience, it finds its worst punishment.

The man without a conscience, is without reason. He may possess the cunning of the madman, but not the brain of a human.

CONTENTMENT.

FIXED the above, and you have the key to happiness. We are a restless set of individuals, always discontented and never satisfied with the station in which our Maker has placed us. We strive for money, and, when we obtain it, we want more and more until it proves to us a bane, instead of a blessing. The child reared in luxury, with

every thing it has need of—fine clothing, a sumptuous house to live in, the coziness of beds to repose on when sleep shuts up its little lids, is not content. No; he would like to throw all his fine clothing aside, and make mud-pies in the gutter; while the child of poverty who is forming those delicate (?) dishes looks up at the more fortunate youth, and thinks he would be perfectly happy to be rich, and have so many fine things to eat and drink, and wear! Neither are satisfied, and each envies the other. Reverse their positions, and it would be just the same.

Susan loves Joseph, and Joseph feels the same love for Susan. As a natural consequence, they imagine they will have found perfect happiness when their marriage takes place. Somehow, Joseph seemed to imagine that Susan's hair would always look trim, and that she could wear her best dresses when she was washing, or scrubbing, or tending the young ones. He thinks it doesn't look right for her to wear her hair just tied up behind. Unreasonable man! How can he expect her to curl her hair, when she's been up with the baby all night, then went to washing all day, and finished up the delightful programme by darning his stockings, or replacing a couple of buttons on his shirt? Precious little time she'd get to "rig up," as he calls it. Maybe Susan complains because Joseph enters the house with muddy boots, and won't hold the baby for a couple of hours. Now, I think Susan is unreasonable, too. She doesn't think how hard it is for him to toil in the burning sun, and rake hay until his arms fairly ache. They both wonder if it wouldn't have been better to have wedded differently. There is but little contentment in their house. They think of their troubles until tired, and then cross words ensue, and when those come, farewell to the "dinner of herbs." Let each give up to the other; it won't be very hard, but it will give so much pleasure that they will each see which can bear the most.

Discontent generally assails those who can not have the finest of fabrics to wear. It is a sad thought that we are valued for what we have on, rather than for ourselves. I regret to add there are many who starve their stomachs to put clothes on their backs. We always want to have the best of every thing, whether we can afford it or not. There is but little real contentment in this world, but I think you will find some of it among the folks in the country, among the high mountains, and in the pure air. Watch them as they are feeding the chickens, making the butter, or driving their produce to market. They seem to smile all over with contentment. They like their homespun clothing, and they like to sit in a house which they know is their own, and not to be worried for rent every quarter. Their amusements are simple and healthful. They rise with the sun, and retire at an early hour. What is the result? Why, by using the hours in the way God intended them to be used, they are healthy; and, in the long run, health must bring happiness and contentment. Look on the bright and cheerful countenances of our country neighbors, and tell me if you don't feel like breaking a commandment, and envying them? Inquire what makes their faces so beaming, and they will answer you: "It is because we are contented."

Now that you have found the remedy, use it! If you don't find it to bring you happiness, then a false prophet is

EVE LAWLESS.

DON'T FRET.

TAKE the world easy. Don't fret about the comparatively petty vexations of life, in view of the many troubles all around you, and to which you are liable at any time. The inevitable—that which you can not help—you can not fret enough to undo, though you fret yourself to death; and, as for what you can help, why take hold and help.

Think of the loss of time and happiness, of the positive discomfort and injury to health, that arise from fretting over trifles. The old farmer who had to tip off and put on a load of wood twice on his way out of the woods, and found it tipped over by a bad place in the road the third time, showed true philosophy when he looked at the wreck, and, saying, "Waal, I guess I won't fret about it—I shan't feel so well if I do," went to whistling merrily, and to work putting matters to rights. Be merry. There are sorrows that strike deep into the heart, and merit and receive the sympathies of all, but the many vexations and troubles of every-day life may well be slighted. God has placed us here to be happy, and provided ample means for our happiness as long as we trust in Him, and to go through the world fretting, growling, and finding fault, thereby making ourselves and all around us unhappy, is an injury to ourselves, injustice to our friends, and base ingratitude to God.

THE DIVINE PROVIDER.

THE creation is a divine attribute the grossest Materialist admits; and even the advocates of the so-called Darwinian theory of progressive development confess themselves confronted at almost every step of their investigations by the evident influences of a divine purpose—a will supreme to the thing itself.

This evidence of purpose in the several phases of progress, which is now recognized as the established order in which the material world has developed, is not more apparent in the Coal Measures, the Salt Sea, the Tides, the Magnetic Pole, Electrical Force, etc., than in the astounding part which ice has played in preparing the surface of the earth for man's reception and sustenance.

That the Earth passed through an Ice Period, just previous to the advent of man, is a well-established physical fact. The whole Northern Hemisphere was one vast ice theater, and icebergs of truly gigantic dimensions drifted down from the far North, to grind the growing earth into very powder beneath the mighty mass. Far over the land swept the frozen sea. All the continent, save the highest mountain peaks, was covered by the congealed waters, and with awful majesty the icebergs marched down to their work of erosion and destruction—their beneficent work—their specially allotted work which the Divine Provider had ordered, arresting the due order of natural development to have this work accomplished.

Of what use, do you ask, was this remarkable phenomenon? What was God's purpose in introducing that awful period of desolation and apparent chaos? Hear what the wise Agassiz says: "We have our answer in the fertile soil which spreads over

the temperate regions of the globe. The glacier was God's first plow, and when the ice vanished from the face of the earth, it left it prepared for the hand of the husbandman. The hard surface of the rocks was ground to powder, the elements of the soil were mingled in fair proportions, granite was carried into the lime regions, lime was mingled with the more arid and unproductive granite districts, and a soil was prepared fit for the agricultural uses of man. Therefore I think we may believe that God did not shroud the world He had made, in snow and ice, without a purpose, and that this, like many other operations of his providence, seemingly destructive and chaotic in its first effects, is nevertheless a work of beneficence and order."

CHIPS.

IN the solitude of my chamber, I have whittled off the following chips:

It is just as easy for a man to put his hand to his head, when it aches, as it is to be "short of funds" when a friend asks for the loan of a trifle.

I should just as soon fail to put my tongue into the cavity of a freshly extracted tooth as to believe all the telegrams in a newspaper. They may be "reliable," but it strikes me the lie is rather too strong.

It is mighty hard for a man to hold a red-hot poker in his hand, but, if you were to heat a golden eagle to the same temperature, and let it lie around loose somewhere, I don't think many would object to carrying it a mile or two, if it was given to them.

I like to see a boy whittle, but he ought to have something to show for it. I tried to impress this upon Deblivity Joseph, when he was young. One afternoon, I lent him my jack-knife, and said to him, "Cut thyself out a name." Like a good son, he obliged me. He had two badly wounded hands to show for his work, and he had cut out his name from a pair of my pantaloons. Well, that wasn't what I intended him to do.

Mrs. Smithers thought him ingenious—I thought him infernal. I gave him a cutting, and he had something to show for it. It does me good to whip a child—I mean, it does them good.

When I hear a minister preaching about how much such a piece of old-time money was worth, and giving glowing descriptions of the wealth of Solomon's Temple, I think he imagines his parishioners will feel rather ashamed of themselves for making him live in a shabby house on \$250 per year.

I know many a person who loves the Bible, but a good many more who hanker after the golden clasps which hold the covers.

There are hosts of people who are howling about this being "a degenerate age," and yet don't seem to think they are some of those who make it so.

There are more husbands saved from ruin by hearing their wives say, "Now, try not to be late, George," than there ever will be by, "If you're not home by ten o'clock, you'll never hear the last of it."

A man once asked me where the graveyard was, and I told him it was just next door to the patent medicine doctor's. I was right in two senses of the word.

Pills are little things, and yet some of them make us feel better. Just so with kind words—they are small, but they often touch the heart quicker than money would.

Boys commencing to write will make many blots, and when we strive to do good, we meet many drawbacks. The boys make good writers, and forget about the blots; and we become better by forgetting all our grievances.

"If you please," and "thank you," are simple words to say, yet some people would rather be hung than use them; perhaps they have never been taught to do so. Who knows?

A man makes an ascension in a balloon—and though we imagine ourselves as wonderful creatures, to the aeronaut we look like mere pigmies. How, then, do you suppose we look to our Creator, who is so far above us in every way?

We often think a sexton must have a callous heart, to sing while digging a grave, but it is his livelihood, and who wouldn't sing over a job that "pays"?

I don't like to hear a man cry "God help the poor," and then put up the price of coal beyond their reach.

A fellow once courted a girl named Miss Roselene—he thought it the sweetest one he had ever read of, or heard of—and yet he desired her to change it to his own. Discontented fellow, wasn't he? There are a good many people feeling the same way.

We are rarely ever satisfied with our own pictures; and, because we are not good looking, we blame the artist. Just so, in real life—we act like anything but what we ought to be, but the D—l gets all the merit of it.

What beautiful words Shakespeare has given to us, yet they sound so differently when spoken by rood and by poor readers.

A man is proud of a clean, white bosom to his shirt, but it spoils the looks of the whole of it to get it stained with only one drop. A stain on the soul spoils the body of man. [Beg pardon, Mr. B. Chew, for trespassing on your farm.]

Loads of people would patronize my show, if they didn't have to pay for it. There are a great many individuals striving for Heaven in the same way—striving to go if they didn't have to do any thing to get there.

A baby's laugh in the house isn't much, to be sure; but, oh! how much it is missed, when it is silent in death!

When we want to talk of persons' faults, let's go in a corner by ourselves, and talk over our own. There will be employment enough.

SMITHERS, THE SHOWMAN.

Keep It Before the People!

That the SATURDAY JOURNAL publishes no serial or story, no matter whence it comes, which is not up to the best standard for power, originality, freshness and brilliancy in plot, character and narrative style.

That its serials are short, crisp, significant and highly taking.

That no humdrum writers are among its corps of contributors.

That, in all departments, it is thorough and satisfying.

That it now numbers, on its list of authors, several of the finest living writers of fiction, essay, sketch and gossip—all in the very freshness of their well-proven power.

That some of the most captivating romances and tales that ever graced popular journalism are to run through the year, making it, *par excellence*, the most enjoyable, most enticing, most varied and most attractive of all the Weeklies.

KEEP IT BEFORE THE PUBLIC!

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepared in postpaid envelopes, and must be accompanied by the enclosure, for such return.—Book MS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but no charge is made for the return of MSS. and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails at "Book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit of fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy;" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We return "Victims of Perjury." Author asks us to criticize. Can't do so.—The story, "Reuben Powell," we return. It is long and rather spiritless in narrative style.—"Walter," if not appearing in the accepted list, if by a boy of thirteen, it is *unfamiliar* well.—Will use poem by W. M. F. with slight changes.—"The MS. by Mrs. M. A. S. we return. It is wholly unavailable, we are sorry to say. Who was the Murderer?" we can not find place for—having an overstock of that class of matter. No stamps.—"Phantom Bark" not available. Too long for the story it tells. Have written author.—Will use "Night in Cincho Hills." "The Risky Shot;" "Bleeding a Poet;" "The Beauty of the St. James;" "The Patriot's Daughter;" "The Buried Treasure;" "Overheard."—We return MS. to J. McJ. Rochester, N. Y.—Can not find place for "Treasons of Heart." It is all commonplace enough—a string of homilies and moral reflections already strong a thousand times. No stamps.—Cora McL. is informed that her MSS. have not arrived. Was it posted properly prepaid? If *unprepaid* the package may have been refused by us for that very reason.

Can use poems, "Sybil;" "A Rose Charm;" "A Face in the Clouds;" "Hand of Man;" author can assure us of their poetic originality. This of course is meant as no reflection on the author, but simply as a means of self-protection. There are so many literary imitations about that editors are now compelled to distrust every thing offered by parties not known as writers for some reputable journal. The number of authors who are so large that we are surprised at editors and publishers' leniency in the matter.—"Cascadia John" is good enough for use, but being a heartless lie, will have to ask its revision and reduction before use. *Compression* is the order with us—concentrated sweets.

The writer of the letter regarding General Cass, did not notice that the General was dead, is much in error. The General was not, as has been represented, a bad man. On the contrary he had many splendid qualities of heart and head. His enthusiasm in the cause of the People, it was which led him into the revolution.

A GREAT BORE wishes to ask our opinion of the style of woman's *rig*, etc. We answer, in all candor, it is positively repulsive. If any woman wears the *rig* on the lower back far transcends the old style "bustle" in size, while, being made of a framework of steel, it is a string of horrors, that is simply disgusting. This is the view of gentlemen generally. But, will that prevent the thing from becoming popular with fashionables? Certainly not. Women who are so devoted to styles, wear the steel bustle, it can be readily inferred are not going to let their modesty interfere with donning whatever is fashionable.

K. S. G. We do not know in regard to the excursion referred to. One of the Hamburg line of steamers, we believe, proposes a summer trip to Great Britain and the North of Europe, stopping a few days at each important port, making the round of England, Scotland and Ireland, etc., but as to rates of fare we are not informed. It will, doubtless, be a very pleasant affair if well managed.

A FRIEND is quite in error regarding the profits of the book trade. Not half the books published pay expense; one-quarter barely pay their cost and necessary advertising; the other quarter are lost to the publishers. It is about enough to square the year's accounts. It is the occasional *hit* which is the great incentive to publish. The idea that publishers systematically rob authors is absurd—to use no harsher term.

A ROMANIST. We can not say any thing about your serial until we examine it. Of course the chances for an uninteresting serial are very small, popular favor is very small. There is no royal road to the fame of an author. Toil and study win the laurel crown.

DETROIT. Yes; a pair of scales have been manufactured so delicate, that they will be placed under a glass shade to insure a steady balance. They are used to weigh particles of poison, and the slightest breath would disturb their equilibrium.

U. V. wishes to know if there is any truth in the following stanzas:

"An evening red and a morning gray
Are sure signs of a fine day;
Be the evening gray and the morning red,
Put on your hat or you'll wet your head."

There is, we can assure him, much truth in it, and for the following reasons: The sky is red, if there be no condensation at the west to obscure the rays of the sun; if there be, it is gray, or more or less of cloud, and, if obscured, there are no sunbeams denotation over to the east of us, in the morning, to reflect the rays of the sun, the sky is gray; if there be such condensation, the sun is reflected from the sky and the sky is red. Such morning condensation is indicative of foul weather. It is the eastern edge of an approaching storm, and the sun, which shines and illumines it. Thus, at night it shines through a portion of the west, which is situated between the sun and the observer, and the sky is gray, or under a portion, in the morning, east of us, but not far east enough to obscure the horizon, and the rays of the rising sun are reflected from it. In either case, the red or gray appearance results from the relative situation of the sun and the eastern edge of approaching rain.

INQUIRER. Both chocolate and cocoa are made from the seeds or beans of the cocoa-tree, which grows in the West Indies and South America. The Spanish and proper name is *cacao* not *cocoa*, as it is generally spelled; from this mistake, the tree from which the substance is procured has been confounded with the palm that produces the edible cocoanuts, which are the products of the *coccoloba* (*cocos* *nudifera*), and the *cacao* and *cocoa* are entirely different (*the throbroma cacao*).

J. L. M. Gulliver's Travels were written by Dean Swift, an Irish clergyman, who mixed up his religion with politics and the world, and was a very clever man, but very merciless and uncharitable; hence his madness for all madmen begins with uncharitableness. What his object was in writing the story, other than mere fun, can not be discerned. Some say that it is a political satire; it is rather a book written to show the power of contrast by comparing things that might be with things that are.

The only part of the book that has had popular circulation is that of Lilliput. Singular to say, the rest is scarcely ever alluded to.

BOZZER has advertised for a wife, not being able to find a lady among his circle of acquaintances to suit him, and

DEAD ALLIE.

BY FRANK S. FINN.

No little eyes in the doorway now
Gazing for me through the window-pane;
No gentle hands to bid me go,
They never will welcome me home again.
No merry laugh as I open the door
Will greet my footsteps weary and worn;
No childish voice in my ears will pour
The joys and troubles she's undergone.
No little arms pressed around my neck
To tell me how much she's learned this day;
No little fingers my hair to deck
With roses and grasses gathered at play.
No little form to kneel at prayer,
And lip the Savior's most blessed name;
No form to life with tenderest care,
To shield from trouble and grief, or pain.
The little stone in the churchyard near,
With Allie's name in letters of gold,
Will start a fresh heart-felt tear,
As I mourn for Allie, so dead and cold.
But up in heaven I know full well
Allie is singing sweet hymns of love;
And telling me not to grieve, or dwell
On the sorrow that soon will be ended above.

That Ventilator!

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"CONFOUND those girls! And so fondly hoped to keep clear of any specimen of the softer sex—at least, during my rusticiating period."

And Mr. Harry Bertrand, a handsome enough young fellow, leaned dolefully—if not half vexedly—meerschaum in hand, away from the window that commanded a view of the croquet ground.

So he watched the smoke-wreaths circle gracefully away from his mustached mouth, wondering if his landlady, Mrs. Fuller, was guilty of treachery, or had been guilty of downright falsehood, when she had solemnly assured him there were no lady boarders, and only one other gentleman—"a quiet enough gentleman, the dear knows." But, horror of horrors! Ossa and Pelion piled! shades of discomfited bachelors and vinegary old maids! here were two young girls who had suddenly lighted on the Fuller domicile, and by some shrewd diplomatic skill, succeeded in ensconcing themselves in the very next room.

Mr. Harry Bertrand had seen their arrival, and shivered at sight of the six trunks, packed with feminine weapons of war, doubtless; he had groaned when he heard them laughing and chatting through the halls and in their rooms, although we must confess, for the sake of our hero—whom we are a little ashamed of, because he did so dislike women generally, because one unwomanly one had proven traitress to her sex, and cruelly jilted him—we will confess, just to excite him a little, that he remarked the music of one of those girls' voices—how sweet it was, and how rippling her laugh was! But, more than all—far more than all—was the terrible wink Mrs. Fuller gave him, as, after an unexpected introduction to the young ladies in the hall, she nudged him meaningly.

"One of them's an heiress, you see—" But, Harry scowled her into sudden silence. He was very much obliged, of course, for her disinterested kindness, but he detested heiresses, although they were, doubtless, very charming young ladies; and then he smiled very grandly, to show her how completely he was above such a thing as money-hunting. After dinner, he went up to his room; he could hear the girls laughing and chatting directly under his window, on the croquet lawn, and drew away from the casement, with a vague idea that one of the two had the most silvery voice he ever had heard.

"In the next room! I think Mrs. Fuller might have known better than to give us an apartment next to his."

Fay Anderson's sweet, high voice spoke in most indignant terms.

"That's nonsense, Fay, now! As if Mr. Bertrand's occupancy of the next room can annoy us, unless, indeed, my dear Miss Fay Anderson, he learns you are not the great attraction, but that my own humble self is the seventy-five thousand dollar prize, eh?" Their merry laughter came floating through the air.

"He'll fall in love with you, sure, Dell," said Fay, merrily, "for there's few men who can withstand the temptation of such a prize. Mr. Bertrand is nice, too, I think."

And then, in the next room, Harry Bertrand smiled most sarcastically, for the ventilator open by the chambermaid, and, consequently, he had heard all that was said.

"So, Dell Gresham was the heiress, was she? Well, he was thankful for one thing, anyhow—pretty little silver-voiced Fay Anderson was just the finest girl he had come across lately."

He was thinking some such thoughts as that, when Dell Gresham's clear tones came ringing merrily out again.

"At any rate, Fay, I'll not mislead the gentleman—you can pass off for the wealthy one, you know. I haven't the slightest objection. And I'll wager a pair of six and a quarter white Alexanders that neither Mr. Bertrand nor Royal Emmett will pay me any attention when they learn you have all that delightful fortune."

Harry fairly hugged himself, as he heard Dell's campaign plans. He did not fail to observe the slight vein of jovial sarcasm in her tones, as though it would be such a surprise to make people think Miss Anderson was the heiress, when, after all, it was Dell's own. He was heartily glad that Fay was not rich, for, somehow or other, she had fascinated him very strangely—and then he was sensible of a jealousy toward that "Royal Emmett" he had heard mentioned.

So he made up his mind, then and there, to continue his acquaintance with pretty little brown-haired Fay, who was going to "play off" the heiress; then—then—his thoughts grew strangely imaginative, as he progressed far enough into his day-dreams to see bridal favors, and priests in their surplices, and a disappointed lover envying him his good luck.

With a "confound it!" and an angry toss of his half-smoked cigar into the paper-frilled grate, Harry managed to get out of his room very quietly, for a man, and escape to the orchard, where the apple-blossoms were scattered all over the young grass.

"She's a remarkably fine girl—the handsomest foot I ever saw in my life."

And Mr. Royal Emmett nodded approvingly out of the window of Harry Bertrand's room, to where he saw Dell Gresham's white dresses fluttering among the trees.

Harry glanced warningly toward the next room.

"Don't speak so loud, Emmett—the lady may be in there."

"No—for I met her on the piazza as I came in, hat and sacque on. She's down yonder with Miss Gresham, without question; although I've no objection to her hearing me compliment her."

"Certainly not," smiled Harry, "yet the compliment is rather doubtful in its good taste as regards her ears."

"I don't admit that; but, Bertrand, did you know she was worth a cool seventy thousand? Miss Anderson, I mean."

"I believe it is so reported, although I do not think so. I hope she is poor as—"

He stopped suddenly, the hot blood surging to his very temples.

Mr. Emmett stared incredulously at Harry a moment, then laughed, almost boisterously.

"A-h! I comprehend, idiot that I have been not to see we were both contending for the same prize; I, for no other earthly reason than because I must have a rich wife, and you because you believe her poor, and are afraid to risk your chances as a fortune-hunter!"

"I know she is not the heiress, Emmett," returned Harry, quietly, "because I myself heard the ladies arrange their plan to have it appear that Fay was what Dell really is. I am glad it is so, for I love Fay Anderson for her own sweet self."

His tender, proud tones were in entire keeping with his fine face and figure as he drew himself up when he thus confessed his precious secret.

Mr. Emmett drew a long breath, and looked curiously at Harry.

"Bertrand, you'll swear to that? For, such being the case, I'll transfer my allegiance to Miss Gresham in less than two minutes."

Harry's lip curled.

"My word is as good as my oath, Emmett; but, I'd take the latter that Miss Gresham will not be supremely blessed in a lover who is as fickle as mercenary."

Emmett laughed.

"You don't know the way of the world, my dear friend. Take my advice, look out for number one—and you are welcome to Fay Anderson. Hark! I hear them coming now. As soon as they are alone, I must meet Miss Gresham on the steps and open the campaign."

"But, he had not opened the door, before Fay Anderson with starry eyes and carnation cheeks, stepped lightly in.

Harry sprang forward, his heart bounding in a tumult of ecstasy; while Ray Emmett, his hands crossed behind him, stepped politely aside.

"Thanks to that ventilator," began Fay, in her high, clear voice, whose very music rung a pean of joy through Harry's soul.

"I have heard every word that has passed between you gentlemen. Perhaps I am acting too impulsively, but, Harry Bertrand, when I know you love me for myself alone, I can not resist telling you how glad I am, and how earnestly it is returned."

Then, with a sweet, shy grace, she went up to Harry and laid her two little quivering hands on his breast.

"My darling!—my darling! indeed I love you, more and better now than ever before."

A moment she looked up at his proud, tender face with her bright eyes; then, still leaning toward him, turned partly to Emmett.

"Sir," she said, a haughty frigidity in both voice and manner. "Mr. Bertrand did hear Miss Gresham and I playfully suggest some such arrangement; never thinking any one overheard us. Five minutes later, we both had forgotten it, for, while I am, really the heiress, and thus can give Harry the princely fortune he deserves, you need not think Miss Gresham would for a moment favor your suit. Besides, as money is your chief consideration, Dell is not blessed with it, even were she foolish and blind enough to allow you to court her."

Mr. Emmett went out, somehow, and not as gracefully as usual; while Fay and Harry blessed that ventilator that had been the instrument of their greatest earthly joy.

The Doctor's May Basket.

BY JULIA VAUGHN.

"Well, Max, I have good news for you! Doctor Carrington has invited all of us fellows to his *soiree* this evening, and mentioned you as a shining light. With his patronage, you may yet do something as a doctor in this sickly old town. But, what is the matter, old boy? You look as if you had swallowed one of your own prescriptions for want of a patient. Any new trouble?"

Max Haydn made room for his friend on the bed beside him. The chairs were doing table duty, supporting the debris of a disorderly physician's apartment, and consequently were not available.

Then he lifted his boot, which he had

been dolefully surveying, and, pointing to an unsightly gap extending along one side, exclaimed:

"A pretty object, indeed, to go to a *soiree*! Look at that, will you?" bringing his foot in such close proximity to his friend's nose that Dick thought best to lengthen the distance between them. "A beautiful foot to introduce into a lady's drawing-room, is it not? No, Dick, go without me. Win the old doctor's favor, take whatever advantage that may give you, and, perhaps, marry Miss Vida, at last, and be happy."

"Nonsense, Max; you're the only one with a ghost of a chance in that quarter, and no wonder. One glance at your handsome face would win any girl's heart."

"Yes, especially if she should catch sight of this boot. Dick, can't you lend me one, or isn't there something we could sell?"

Dick shook his head sadly.

"This is my only pair, and they are nothing to boast of. As for selling something, I am afraid that, too, is impracticable. Neither of us is rich in earthly possessions. But, Max, I have it; mend it!"

Max laughed.

"I have, Dick, a dozen times, but, the trouble is, it will not stay. However, I'll try it once more. So call around, old fellow, at nine o'clock, and in the daylight, I dare say, it will never be detected."

Hopeful Max! He stood that evening in Doctor Carrington's parlor, and with Vida beside him; his boot, neatly mended by his own experienced hand, was forgotten, and he was happy.

Once or twice he heard an ominous crack that sounded fearfully loud to his sensitive ears; but, a suspicious glance downward showed that the seam remained intact, and inwardly resolving to remain as quiet as possible for the rest of the evening, he banished disagreeable reflections from his mind.

Just as he had arrived at this sensible conclusion, a sweet strain of music floated out upon the air, followed by Vida's merry voice.

"Oh, Doctor Haydn, your favorite, the galop. You enjoy dancing so much, and here is an opportunity to choose your partner."

There might have been alternatives, but none presented themselves to Max.

He recklessly offered his arm to his fair hostess, and in another moment they were whirling down the room.

He saw Dick's frantic gestures for him to

"Mistaken?" repeated Max; "there can be no mistake, for a message from your own hand was attached. The May basket I received bore socks for leaves, and coats and boots for blossoms. Oh, Vida, poor though I am, I hardly thought that you would add to my mortification by offering me charity."

"Charity?" Then seizing the card he mechanically held in his hand, she exclaimed: "Oh, Max, I see it all now! How could you think that basket was intended for you? It was for some of papa's patients."

"But the card with my name and address upon it, Vida?"

"It is one of your own cards, and was lying on the table with the one directed to them. I must have taken yours up by mistake, and the penciled words I added afterwards. Oh, Max, what must you think of me?"

"Think of you? That you are the best and sweetest little angel in the world, and I will only have the recollection of another stupid blunder to take with me when I leave this miserable place forever."

"Do you mean, Doctor Haydn, that you leave us after papa has withdrawn from practice in your favor? I thought that you would have valued his proffer more highly."

Max stared.

"Withdrawn from practice! You don't mean, Vida Carrington, that I am to take his place? Oh, then—"

Max paused and began to feel the difficulties of that position.

"Then you will not leave us, Doctor Haydn?" she asked, with a charming blush.

"Vida, you say upon this card: 'If you have need of any thing else, I will see that you have it. I have great need of something else. I have need of you, darling, and as you are a conscientious little girl, you must keep your promise.'"

"But, Max, I didn't make any such promise to you."

Max silenced this sophistry after a manner of his own, and declared that his May basket would be worthless without the message that it brought.

It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rust upon the blade. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction. Fear secretes acids, but love and trust are sweet juices.

That Ventilator.

Hoodwinked: OR, DEAD AND ALIVE.

A Tale of Man's Perfidy and Woman's Faith.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR., AUTHOR OF "RALPH HAMON, THE CHEMIST," "THE WARNING ARROW," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV. A TIGER IN A RAGE.

LORD HALLISON BLAIR met the headlong attack of the drunken Madge in a summary manner. Quick as a flash, his stout cane circled through the air, and, like a bar of iron, it came down upon her head—not true to his aim, however, as a sudden, involuntary movement on her part caused the stroke to fall upon the side of her skull, glancing thence to the shoulder, where it hit with a deadened sound; and, for a second, she tottered as if about to go down under the chastisement.

But, recovering herself, she again started at him, when the physician, from behind, threw his arms around her, pinioned her elbows, bent her head down, and called on Blair to assist.

Quite unexpectedly Madge Marks straightened up, shook her arms loose, and, by the motion, sent Doctor Gulick Brandt backward upon the floor.

Another blow from the cane, truer than the first, at this instant, felled her, and, tripping over the prostrate form of the physician, she struck with such force as to fairly shake the room.

"Perdition!" exclaimed Blair, as he replaced the cane in the corner, "she is a perfect devil unchained! Now, what to do with her perplexes me."

"Curse her!" blurted Dr. Brandt, regaining his feet; "my bones are nearly all broken! She is strong as an ox!"

"I could have warned you of that; but there was no time to advise in this case. She is helpless enough now. We have no other course than to keep her here. She will probably have to sleep off her intoxication, and we may have to put up with her disgusting presence until to-morrow. I think Diego will be here then, and he can take her away. Come, we'll put her on the sofa. The idea of having to handle such a thing! I will have to get rid of the sofa after her dirty form being on it."

They raised the limp, heavy body of Madge Marks, and placed it on a sofa.

"Who is she?" very naturally inquired the physician.

"An old hag, as you see—one among the hundreds who infest London. She lives with Diego Perez, in their miserable hovel, wherever it is; and, I suppose, gets her living by picking, stealing—throat-cutting, no doubt. Her nature is of that kind, and the Thames is convenient for such purposes. By-the-by, doctor, hurry down-stairs, and gather up those cards she threw out the window. If they should be found there, in the street, it would create unpleasant talk in the neighborhood."

The physician immediately quitted the apartment on this errand. When he gained the street, he looked about him on every side, but failed to discover any signs of the cards.

"Not there!" exclaimed Lord Hallison, surprisedly, when Gulick Brandt returned, and reported a fruitless search; "why, where can they have gone to? Oh, perhaps some passer-by has already picked them up. Never mind; if they are not there at daylight, I am satisfied. Eh? Listen. What is that hag saying in her drunken sleep?"

"You must not do it, Diego, I say! Ay, 'cozita' as much as you like—I have sworn you shall not do it. It is young Victor—ha! ha! ha! you don't know who he may be! Ho! I know, though—I know who—who—he—he—"

"What is she talking about?" asked Brandt, in a whisper. The nobleman smiled. Incoherent as was her utterance—the above is only the substance—the few plainer-spoken syllables were readily comprehended by him; and he answered, in an undertone:

"I see through all this now. I know how she came to be drunk. Diego is cunning—but he has given me trouble in this instance."

"What is it, Lord Hallison? Explain."

"When Diego went from here this evening, I judge he returned to his home, and she pumped his secret from him—his bargain with us. The probability is, she has opposed him; and he, to get rid of her, has given her drink until she is intoxicated. I know she dislikes me; Diego has told me so. Why it is, I know not. And by the words she dropped, I think she vowed to prevent his fulfillment of the bargain in regard to Victor Hassan. That is what I divine from her—ah! Hear. She is chattering again."

"Ha! ha! ha!" she gutturally laughed, starting in a fresh strain. "You think to fool me. Just one, and no more. Only one drink. Ha! he's gone! Diego—Diego—come back! Don't kill him!"

"You see," said Blair, in an undertone. "Diego has eluded her, and gone to perform his task."

"Come back, Diego!" went on Madge Marks, as her brain, and lips, and lungs occupied themselves even in her drunken insensibility. "Oh! Diego, it may be the boy—it may be young Victor. Satan! he will go—and I am foiled! Curse you! If you knew it was the real son—the real son—who—"

"What is she saying?" and the Englishman leaned eagerly forward; for her last words seemed to interest him.

An unbroken quietness reigned; both listened for the next words to escape her swollen lips; but the latter were sealed in silence. She said not another word. For full twenty minutes they waited, but she spoke no more.

"Wake her, Lord Hallison," suggested Brandt, at the expiration of that time.

"Wake her? Oh, no; hardly! Do you imagine I am anxious for a repetition of her demonstrative hate? Let her alone, and she will sleep off the effects of the liquor. I only hope she may remain where she is till Diego comes again. Ayho! I am very sleepy. I propose to retire. We must do without our game of cards to-night."

"Will you leave her here?" pointing to Madge Marks.

"Oh, yes; as well here as anywhere. We can lock the door. When she recovers her senses, she will not injure any thing."

"What if she should struggle up, and, in the dark, fall from the window?"

"Ha! ha! I half hope such will be the case. Come. To bed." (Stretching wearily.) "I wonder how my pretty Pauline enjoyed her ride this afternoon? Ha! what's that?"

There was another sound of confusion in the hall below, and this time it was of a familiar kind. The front door banged; the servants were heard to flee precipitately before the comer; a heavy step ascended the stairs; a surly rumbling, grunting, growling, ejaculating, became audible.

"It is Diego Perez!" at once exclaimed the nobleman. "Can he have performed his work so soon, and returned to receive the balance of his pay?"

With a jerk and a whizz, the door flew open and back, striking the wall with a clang, and the bull-fighter entered. His hat was gone; his cloak was missing; his appearance was strange; his bronzed features wore a disappointed look. They saw that he was displeased, that he was furious; his teeth gritted; his eyes snapped fiercely; his fists doubled and relaxed alternately; he snarled, looked wild, haggard, terrible—like a beast ready to devour, or like a giant ready to annihilate; his whole mien was calculated to impress one with the idea that a tiger, transformed to a man with bristling face, sinewy limbs, treacherous heart, was about to launch itself, roaring, biting, tearing, upon somebody, or something, or any thing, or every thing.

Near the center of the room he halted abruptly, and cast a glance upon the two men, who were, for a second, speechless on beholding him in such a condition, such fury; for his cheek blanched in the horrible fire of wrath which turmoil and seething within him.

"Well, Diego," spoke the Englishman, interrogatively, "what does this mean?"

"Mean, my lord!—mean!" he roared, with voice of a hurricane, lungs of a lion, tonation of a circular saw when it strikes the yielding wood. "Mean! Dios!—and Dios again! You see me? Do you read me? Am I myself?—or do I picture a scarecrow in my look? 'Sdeath!—and the devil! I am only half come! I am here—but my life nearly paid for it, instead of that strapping fellow for whom I meant 'knife-thrust!' and he rocked to and fro unreasonably."

"How, Diego?" and Lord Hallison Blair stepped up to him, also frowning as he half-surmised his meaning; "have you failed?"

"Failed? No!" (with a scowl at Brandt.) "But I am balked. Balked. Do you understand that? Balked."

"Did you attempt the young man's life?"

"Yes," surlily.

"Did you succeed?"

"No; curse him!" hotly.

"Ha! then you did fail?" and he continued: "No, I did not fail!" fiercely; and he continued: "I tell you I was balked. My knife was sharp; my arm was steady; my nerves were well braced; I had sworn to do the deed—then how could I fail? I was by his bedside; I was about to strike at his heart, when something struck me from behind, somebody pounced upon me; and more—they carried me down before I could fight. A pistol pressed my cheek; I tried to shake off my enemy, and—b—but! what use in all this? The young man lives. I am lucky in keeping my own life!"

"How unfortunate!"

"Ten thousand blasphemies! yes. I was tricked dirtily!"

"And how happened this interloper in your plans, so opportunely on the scene? Who was it? Do you know him?"

"Ay, Satan take him! well do I know him."

"Who was it?"

"Mr. Joseph Fleet, of the Secret Service force of London, is in the parlor, and would see my lord without delay," at this juncture announced a servant, ere the bull-fighter could answer the nobleman's inquiry.

"Cospita!" exclaimed Diego; "the very man! It was he! He it was who foiled me!" and he glared upon the servant in a savage way, evidently astonished at hearing that the detective was in the house.

The reader will remember that, when Joe Fleet discovered Diego Perez operating on the lock of the door, he drew back into the space of another doorway near him, and pulled off his boots. They had served him now admirably. One boot, swung with unerring aim, struck the Spaniard on the temple; and, in a trice, the detective was astride of Diego. He pinioned him firmly down, placed a pistol against his shaggy head, and chuckled over the capture.

The noise aroused Victor Hassan; and, as the young man started from his couch, two doors on opposite sides of the room opened, through which appeared Calvert Herndon and Simon Jeremiah Ebenezer Kraak, both considerably alarmed.

"Mr. Fleet, what on earth is this? What has happened? How came you here? Who is that man?"

"I came here on business. This rascal came to stick you with a knife. That's all. See it—the knife. There it is on the floor yonder!" then to his captive. But, you didn't do it—oh? You dog! I say you didn't do it. My name is Fleet—Joe Fleet. You know me? Have you ever heard of me? You devil! Thank me for this. I just came in time, didn't I? What do you think of yourself? you scoundrel!" poking Diego in the ribs, which called forth a deep growl, another oath, a snap of the massive jaws as they closed in a smothered imprecation.

The bull-fighter was taken at a weak point. With all his strength, with all his audacity, he was overpowered and powerless. His limbs and body were securely held, as if padlocked to the floor by a man whose physical endurance and elasticity of frame were adequate to conquer his ugly antagonist.

"There! There! See now!" cried the ex-superintendent; "I told you so! Didn't I say we'd have a hard time? Didn't my dream-book say that, to dream of cards and the devil, meant trouble? Here it is! It's come! I knew it! Wait. I'll find it in my book and read it to you."

But the others paid him little heed. Their attention was directed to the bull-fighter and the detective.

"Let me up!" howled Diego, dismally, choking back the consuming chagrin and anger which teemed in his breast; "I am foiled in this—curse your coming! Then why keep me down here? Let me up; or, by his Holiness the Pope! I'll burst a vein at blaspheming!" but he writhed in vain as he tried to release himself from that iron grip.

"Easy, now," admonished the detective. "You see this pistol is loaded and cocked; so that, if you disturb the trigger, it will be apt to result in a promiscuous scattering of your brains. Now, will you live or die? You can choose." Then, compressing his lips firmly: "Hark ye! I'll not be trifled with. Say so by action, and you can quit this world in a twinkling."

"Bah! the world is a hell. Yet, here, I am master of myself and many others. If I die—though my lot be a heaven, it would be a servile one. Wisely, I choose the world; for, in it, I have a certain reign. Otherwise, I would become a slave. I must live. With me, life is power, though in a mortal hell. Let me up from this."

"That I'll do for you. I know you, Diego Perez—know you for a thief and a ruffian, and well deserving of the halter. Now, if I let you up, will you behave yourself and go with me?"

"Yes."

"First: who sent you here?"

"It is no business of yours."

"Tell me," continued Fleet, sternly, pressing the weapon closer against Diego's head.

"Lord Hallison Blair!" blurted the Spaniard, after a moment's hesitation.

"Good! That's what I thought. Now you may get up," saying which, he released Diego, and the latter scrambled to his feet.

Ostensibly, the bull-fighter meant to keep his word, to accompany Joe Fleet. But, the detective was blinded here.

No sooner was Diego Perez free than, stretching his limbs, twirling his arms, uttering a defiant snarl, he dashed toward a window opposite to where he stood.

Fleet endeavored to intercept him, but, failing in this, he fired the pistol—to no effect, as he judged; for, without reckoning upon the consequences, Diego sprang through the frame. There was a crash, a jingle of glass, and he disappeared.

Simultaneously they ran to the window and looked out. The darkness of the night obscured every thing.

"Devils catch him!" muttered Joe Fleet, "he's escaped me after all, but he's my bird yet. I know his roost."

"What is the solution of this occurrence, Mr. Fleet?" interrogated Calvert Herndon, as he and the others turned to the detective for an explanation.

"That man is Diego Perez—once a Spanish bull-fighter, now a London rough, and a tool of Lord Blair's. He came here to kill you, young man (to Victor), but I prevented the catastrophe, as you see. It's all right, sir, I've seen her—your lady-love; that is, Lady Blair, I mean. All the same. Whole thing fixed shortly. Have yourself ready to come to me when I send for you. I don't know exactly when or where it will be. Be on the watch against assassins."

"You have seen Lady Blair?" interrupted Victor, anxious to hear of Pauline.

"Oh, yes. She's all right—perfectly

well, I mean. Remember, and be on your guard. More anon. Hem! Good-by, all."

Having drawn on his boots while speaking, he hurried from the room, from the hotel, along the street, turning, foot-hot, back toward square St. James, leaving the trio to marvel over the occurrence which had very near cost Victor his life.

When Diego Perez launched himself out into the air from the window of Victor Hassan's room, he fully expected to be mangled in the fall. But, he was desperate, and with him desperation smothered fear; he cared not, as long as he would by the lofty jump escape the detective and the prison-coll, which had loomed in his vision.

Instead of striking, after a violent descent, upon stone, brick or dirt, and being crushed, he suddenly alighted upon the roof of a dwelling without so much as spraining an ankle.

Looking about him, he soon found a trap-door, and he made his way through this to the interior of the building. The house was unoccupied. He continued down the stairs, clambered out at a side window, and entered the street. He was bareheaded—was without his cloak—but he, too, started in the direction of square St. James, in a state of mind difficult to describe.

He reached the nobleman's house in advance of Joe Fleet; and now, upon hearing the detective announced, his wild rage cooled; he could not decide whether Fleet was in hot-like pursuit of him, or whether he had really come there on business with Lord Hallison Blair.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE INTERVIEW.

MOTIONING Diego to be quiet, Lord Hallison Blair turned to the man who waited at the door, and said, calmly:

"Show the visitor to my fencing-room. And make do not make any great haste about it. Delay a few minutes."

"Yes, my lord," and, as the servant withdrew, the nobleman continued, addressing the others:

"Both of you will come with me. You, Diego Perez, must secrete yourself, and, at the clapping of my hands, be ready to—"

"Well," prompted the Spaniard, "and think you I am dumb?—that I know not your meaning? I must be ready, at your say, and then—s-q-u-i-r-l" with a twist of his fingers around the throat, and feeling for the small, sharp poniard he invariably carried in his bosom.

"No, Diego—not that. Simply knock him down—insensible—that's all. If your blow is hard enough to kill, why, we'll have to be satisfied. I will look to the rest," and the significant fire in his eyes was answered by a knowing leer on the part of the bull-fighter. "But, come," added Blair, "there is no time to lose, if we would reach the fencing-room before this rascal comes. I fear a dangerous secret has leaked out. Maybe the detective has discovered something to injure us. Come."

The recumbent form of Madge Marks had, all along, escaped Diego's notice, and, as he followed after the two plotters, his eyes were ablaze, his only thought was of the opportunity about to present in which he could turn the tables on the detective.

Madge was, therefore, left to herself, and, for the time, forgotten. Her drunken sleep was not destined to be of long duration; her action, upon awakening, was to be of considerable importance in the pending scenes of the night.

"Do you entertain any idea that we have been discovered, Lord Hallison?" inquired the physician, in a tremulous whisper, as they descended the stairs to the floor below.

"Discovered? Pshaw! what grounds could I have for any such imagination? Why, you are already turning white. You must do better than this, Gulick Brandt. If you pale and tremble when there is no cause, how will it be when you are arrested for placing the pastille beneath Calvert Herndon's nose? Beware! I advise you for your own welfare, when I say, guard your expression of face even closer than the words of your mouth; or, as sure as death, you'll bring destruction on yourself. Well, what now? Where are you going, sirrah?" the latter interrogatory speech to a serving-man who was ascending to the floor they had just left.

"I—I—I want to get something, my lord; if you please, I—"

"But your place is in the hall. You have no business up here."

"If you please, your lordship, Jeems dropped his kerchief when he's comin' back from a-telling you of the vis'tor down stairs, an' he asked me to get it for 'im, sir, my lord—that's it," bowing low before his exacting master.

Blair eyed the fellow sharply for a second, and then continued on, without comment upon this plausible excuse. Diego snarled, and frowned darkly upon the servant, who made haste to depart.

The Englishman had been lied to by his employee. The latter's real mission was to the apartments of Lady Blair, and he carried a note, under command of strictest secrecy, which contained the following:

"All right. Young man safe. No danger."

"JOB FLEET."

The fencing-room was a square apartment, with high ceiling and floor smooth, white walls, against which were hung, on spikes, nails, pins and knobs, various arms of numerous patterns and elaborate finish.

There were knives, poniards, rapiers, broad-swords, pistols, hunting-rifles, game-bags, shot and bullet pouches, powder-horns and trumpets; foils, masks, gloves, leggings, arm-shields, boxing-gloves, costumes for the chase, riding-whips, spurs—all these suspended, with taste, in appropriate sections and convenient positions, showing that he, Blair, was fond of boxing, fencing, hunting, riding, chasing, yet only an amateur, with small reputation in either line—his forte being the table with the green baize and metal card-box, or roulette, or cards; or, in fine, anything for money, wherein defrauding and mental cunning were applicable.

Near the door was an iron plate—such an one as is in use in our shooting-galleries—at which to discharge a pistol, in practicing—and behind this the bull-fighter secreted himself, checking-reining his eagerness to deal a foul blow at the one who had so successfully thwarted him at the—Hotel.

Joseph Fleet was soon ushered into their presence, and he entered, saluting them politely, which salutation was stiffly acknowledged by the Englishman. Brandt neither bowed nor spoke—he was beginning to tremble; for, with the first glance into the detective's eyes, he fancied he saw there

something threatening, and he remained silent, dreading he knew not what, almost ready to cry out in despair, as he imagined that Fleet had discovered their villainy, and had come to arrest them.

"Take a seat, sir," Blair said. "You have important business with me, I presume, that you should call at this hour—it is growing late."

"Yes—business. Were you going to bed? Sorry, I am—no, but there's something I want to know—something that you alone can tell me—and something I am determined to get at. Understand? I say determined. I am an emissary of the law—a spy, an explorer at large, in the secret service, and so forth. See?"

"Pray you, proceed."

"I will. 'Tisn't often that my calling brings me in contact with any of the nobility. In fact, I've never had a case among any of the noblemen of England since I received my commission—not insinuating that the characters of some don't need investigation. But, as I said before, business is business—and on business I've come here, to see you, and that man, there—Brandt, I believe his name is," and, as he turned from one to the other of his hearers, fixing that steady, sharp, analytical gaze on each, alternately, the physician's nervousness increased, though he strove to conceal it.

After a momentary pause, he went on: "The question I shall propound must be answered promptly, satisfactorily, or I shall be obliged to resort to more persuasive measures than mere polite inquiry. Understand? It is this: Why did you wish Lord Victor Hassan Blair removed from this world to the next, eh? Why did you bargain with a base-born assassin, named Diego Perez, to murder him, eh? What is your excuse for it? Now, don't tell me it was because you feared he would claim and get, by right of lawful heritage, the position you usurp; for I know that already. But, tell me what other motive you had. See? I'm sharp as a sword-fish, keen as the back of a dolphin, on which nobody could ride without a saddle, poet's assertions to the contrary, notwithstanding. What did you want young Hassan killed for?"

Blair started and paled; Brandt trembled; Diego, in his concealment, grew red with pent-up rage.

"Answer me, Lord Hallison Blair," closely pursued the detective, as he saw that the Englishman hesitated, "why did you bribe a ruffian to kill Lord Victor Hassan Blair, the true son, and only surviving relative of Lord Harold, Earl of —, whose position you disgrace? Queer that I know so much, isn't it?"

Lord Victor Hassan Blair! The "B." did, then, signify Blair? Victor had discovered his claim to the title!

The words of Joe Fleet rung in the nobleman's ears, sunk like fire into his brain. He must have seen Victor Hassan! The young man must have acquainted him with the attempt made upon his life in America! What was pending? A crisis, a denouement, in which he, Blair, would become prey to an avenging law!

The above flashed across the Englishman's mind, and while the pallor on his handsome face assumed a whiter hue, he, too, with all his reckless nature, indifference to every situation, boasted promptness to deal with any emergency, grew ill at ease under the plain speech, which indicated that the speaker was thoroughly familiar with the matter in hand.

Gulick Brandt could scarce smother the groan which arose to his lips. The atmosphere seemed, to him, to be growing chilly, disagreeable; a creeping sensation came over him.

"I do not understand you, sir. What is the meaning of this enigmatical strain?" Blair mustered strength to say and ask.

"Oh, you can't comprehend? Listen. Now, I don't exactly what I'm about. Just come from the hotel, from the young man on whom your hired ruffian was about to practice his knife tricks. I happened to be there in time to prevent a murder. See? I half captured the assassin—rascal—had him and he got away."

"Did he tell you?" sputtered Brandt, in a broken, hesitating way; for which utterance, Blair could have throttled him, and at which Fleet smiled, as he answered:

"Partly. He told me. But, never mind, I know about it. I always get at such things in the nick of time. The Spaniard was to receive one hundred pounds for his little job—and I have gleaned a variety of other particulars from different sources. Come, own up. More—tell me why you wanted Victor Hassan murdered?"

"There—there must be some great mistake. I do not, at all, understand this riddle, stammered the nobleman, but it was in well-affected surprise.

"Now, look here," reasoned the detective, argumentatively and emphatically. "I have eyes, and I have ears. I have seen, and I have heard. Seeing and hearing is believing, and consequently you can't blink me by tomfoolery. As long as you won't answer my questions straightforwardly, as long as you won't give me any satisfaction, I'll create a focus by stating why I am here. I, Joe Fleet, legally authorized deputy of justice in the Secret Service force of London—thanks to the favor of his majesty—do pronounce you under arrest for having killed one Diego Perez, to murder in cold blood, a young man, whose name is Victor Hassan, who is the rightful claimant to the title and estates of the late Lord Harold, Earl of —. Further, for having attempted this young man's life on a former occasion, in America. More, for having buried alive one Calvert Herndon, with the assistance of your associate rascal there, Doctor Gulick Brandt. More yet, on suspicion of having persuaded into wedlock, through misrepresentation and fraud, the daughter of said Calvert Herndon. And, as wind the matter up, add my opinion of you, which is, that you are a villain at large, a gamester, a trickster, a man who can espouse, first, the Tory party, then the Whig, then the Tory again, and kill conscience in the furtherance of every dirty triumph. Plain talk, isn't it? Makes you wince, doesn't it? Joe Fleet, I am! So, come along. Business, this is," arising and pointing toward the door.

A bent, crouching form was moving noise-

lessly behind the detective, gradually approaching nearer; a great fist was doubled and clenched till the nails fairly sunk into the hard flesh; a pair of glittering eyes were fixed, without a waver, upon the intended and unconscious victim.

At this critical juncture, there was a rap at the door, and a voice outside said:

"Lady Blair would see my lord in her rooms immediately."

"I can not come." Bear that message to her," quickly answered Blair, fearful that Fleet would turn and ascertain the danger hovering over him.

"Come, my lord, you are my prisoner in the name of the law. Will you go peacefully, or must I use force? Business is business. Come."

"It shall be neither!" cried the Englishman, losing all control over himself, in the feeling of triumph, which he experienced upon marking that Diego was ready to strike. "Perdition catch you for a meddling fool! You have sealed your doom by coming here!" He clapped his hands; there was a growl, and Fleet, with a groan, sunk to the floor.

Diego Perez had felled him as a butcher does the helpless ox, and now stood glovering down upon the still, motionless body, laughing gutturally, entirely forgetting his recent passion in the present moment of apparently perfect triumph.

"Thank God!" ejaculated Brandt, hoping it had been a death-blow.

"Well done, Diego; well done! You shall have another fifty pounds for this!"

"Then I am satisfied," returned the bull-fighter, subsiding to his habitual hung-dog manner. "And, now, you shall pay me fifty more to take him from the house."

"Ha! See—he bleeds," interrupted Lord Hallison, pointing to their victim, from whose bruised temples tiny drops of blood were trickling down to the carpet.

"So be it," was Diego's comment. "Let him bleed. If I had but used my knife, he would be bleeding faster."

He was interrupted again. This time by a second tapping upon the door-panel, and the servant who had knocked before, now said:

"Lady Blair requests me to say that, if my lord would not incur her displeasure, he will come at once."

"Tell her I will come at once," Blair replied, in a pet of impatience; then to the others: "I must go. Fiends take her at this time! She will come here, if I do not attend her. You can return to the room upstairs, while I see what my charming wife wants of me. Let this miserable carcass remain here until I am released from the interview with Lady Blair. I shall not belong, depend upon it. Come."

The trio quitted the room, turning the key, and leaving it in the lock.

Lord Hallison Blair sought his wife; and the physician, with Diego Perez, repaired to the room where they had left Madge Marks.

(To be continued.—Commenced in No. 59.)

The Avenging Angels:

OR, THE BANDIT BROTHERS OF THE SCIOTO.

A BORDER AND INDIAN TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SILENT HUNTER," "QUEEN OF THE WOODS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.—CONTINUED.

THOUGH painted and daubed over with Indian devices, Steve could not, even in that gloomy hour, hesitate to recognize the dress which Martha had worn for some days, and which, though suited to traveling, was yet so coquettishly adorned and bedizened with ribbons and other ornaments as to need no expert to recognize it.

"Sartin," said Steve, "it's her! Curse that coward knave of a Horne—the riotous, twisting, malicious scoundrel! Misused her, I doubt not, and then murdered her. By the Eternal! this game don't last long, Mister Horne! That's vengeance in store for you. Poor gal! poor Tom! How has the foul fiend done it?"

As he said these words, he stooped and drew a knife from the body—a bloody knife, that had been driven home to the very heart by an experienced and callous hand.

"Dead, quite dead," he mused, "and yet warm. My knife—my knife—MY KNIFE!"

And the brave man, clutching his gun with his left hand, held out the innocent weapon at arm's length, literally quivering from head to foot with horror.

"'Twas well for you, thief and robber, that I did not this afternoon catch your face peering at me, for there and then I would have washed your cowardly blood in the stream. But hear me, Heaven! Here in the moonlight, speaking of man to man, whenever I meet this lying, deceitful skulker, this abortion of humanity, be it in house or field, at bed or board, in peace or war—he dies!"

Steve said this quite aloud, placing his gun against a tree as he did so, and preparing to wipe the blood from the knife.

"What's to be done with the body?" he said, aloud.

"Injine bury body," answered a gruff voice, and burn him cowardly pale-face."

The scout turned, to find himself the center of a group of furious Shawnee Indians, whose countenances expressed horror at the deed, and satisfaction at having discovered the murderer.

"Wretches!" cried Steve, angrily, as he saw by their glances how much he was maligned in their thoughts; "yer don't think me mean skunk enough to have done this?" The Indian put his finger on the knife, which the hunter had returned to its sheath.

"Gal dead—knife did it!"

Steve was about to utter a fearful imprecation, but, recollecting how useless were such ebullitions with such men as the Shawnees, he submitted to be disarmed and bound, adding: "Circumstantial evidence, I think them lawyers calls this yar, is a darned queer thing, but I suspect it are hanged a few in its time."

The scout then followed his captors without a word.

Steve was not half so much disturbed by his capture at the hands of the Shawnees as he was at the fatal blow which had descended upon Tom Smith, whose confidant he was and the strength of whose affections he thoroughly understood. That the young couple had gone forth together, that they had been captured by the red-skins, he well knew; though why the girl should have wandered so far, and fallen into the base and brutal hands of one of the Robbers of the Scioto, he could not imagine.

As to his own personal fate, that idea oc-

cupied him but little. The story of the pitcher that went so often to the well and was broken at last, was singularly applicable to the lives of men, who entered upon their occupation knowing that death always stared them in the face and might at any moment be their portion.

The fate of others troubled him much; and yet, thoroughly aware that, until he knew the intentions of the red-skins, planning was useless, he allowed himself to be conducted to the camp, without wasting any unnecessary time in the contemplation of his own fate or that of his companions.

They had soon descended the rapid slope leading to the village, which was now calm and quiescent as if no tragedies were being enacted in its bosom.

By the dim twilight Steve saw that the arrival of his small party of captors was noticed, though all he could distinguish was the occasional rising of Indian forms from the tall, coarse grass, with their dark, quick and rolling eyeballs glaring at him.

His companions led him across the village to a larger wigwam than most of the others, round which a party of warriors were leaning. Within this was burning a flaring torch, which sent its red glare from face to face, as it wavered, like a flicker weather-cock, with every current of air.

A few words were spoken, and then again the captors led the way, until they came to a kind of neglected into which they thrust their prisoner. They had already removed his hands, so that, except being unarmed and guarded by a party of warriors, he did not seem to be a prisoner.

Now Steve, though sore at heart and full of uneasy and uncomfortable thoughts, was exceedingly hungry and thirsty. He had gnawed a bone or two, chewed some grass, and drank water *ad libitum*, but this was all that had passed his lips for several days. No wonder, then, that even the iron frame of the scout was not proof against the exhaustion caused by pure inanition. Still he was a white man, and a man without a cross—one who had lived in the prairie and the forest too long not to have imbibed the pride of his class.

He determined, therefore, not to allow his feelings to be noticed; so, with assumed cheerfulness and gravity, he seated himself on a pile of brush, lit a small fire, pulled forth his tobacco and pipe, loaded it, and proceeded assiduously to cultivate the further acquaintance of the only luxury he was likely to enjoy in this world.

The young Indian braves looked upon him with something of admiration; but soon, having feasted their eyes sufficiently, they retired.

When Steve heard the last watcher near the hut glide away, he rose with a yawn, and, pipe in mouth, stood at the open door.

The twilight had now subsided, and given way to a beautiful night. The moon had risen above the tree-tops, and now threw her level rays upon the broad face of the massive pile of rocks behind the village, and lit up with silvery splendor the foliage that clothed the steep cliff and the almost perpendicular hill in its neighborhood.

On the opposite side of the stream a line of beech and sycamore trees, that grew almost at the water's edge, cast a dark shadow upon the bank. Through these the bright moonlight fell at intervals upon the earth and upon the deep and quiet stream. The woods were vocal with the whispering noises that give discord to the nights of summer, and yet there was a stillness that invited to graver thoughts.

"I wonder, now, what them Avenger chaps think o' Master Steve? I wonder, too, how they're getting on for grub? This child's pretty particularly done up. But, it don't matter—it don't matter an hour or two, more or less—for these bones will soon be cinders, and then it won't much matter that I've felt a bit hungry and thirsty."

Like all accustomed to solitude, Steve spoke aloud when there were none to hear him—all the time smoking his tobacco with the peculiar relish of a hungry man.

As his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he saw, over against his hut, where a pine tree stood, two tall figures of Indians, erect and watchful, with their eyes bent on the wigwam, though, to all appearance, simply lounging there in idle conversation.

Had Steve contemplated escape, this would have decided him; though he well knew that, under any circumstances, it would be difficult, and likely to precipitate a fate which already was likely to be bitter and unpleasant enough.

No sooner had the moon risen so as fully to illumine the camp than Steve became aware that the Indians were about to indulge in a feast. This was sufficiently indicated by the gathering of groups of warriors round several large fires, by the busy air of the squaws, and by the odor of roast meat which now greeted his nostrils.

"Darn 'em!" he said, "I wish they'd make haste. When they're dead beat maybe I'll find a bone. A man can but wait." And Steve sat down within his door, still pulling away at his pipe, and resolved to abide until the feast was over.

This was likely to be a long time. The red-skin, when neither on the war-trail, nor in council, nor in the presence of large bodies of the whites, can eat, and drink, and dance through the night as well as any white carouser—he can enjoy a song, a tale, a joke, with any toper in a tap-room—and play any quantity of antics under the influence of rum.

That the Robbers of the Scioto had supplied their allies with ample store of drink was soon made manifest, and it was equally certain that the feast would last as long as a drop of the liquor held out—that liquor which has been the great downfall of the Indian race, one of whom declared "that it could only have been distilled from the hearts of wild-cats and the tongues of women—it made him so fierce and so foolish."

Many and many a wild whoop rose on the night air; many a frantic circle of dancers sung round the fire—now in fierce and startling tones, now in plaintive and mournful accents—while loud was the sound of unmeaning shrieks and roaring laughter, followed by the squeaking of women, the jabbering of children, and the barking of curs.

"I'd better sleep it off," said Steve, aloud; "it ain't likely this ere diversum is going to stop."

A low growl was heard at this moment, close to him, and, averting his eyes from the pandemonium-like scene which presented itself to his view, they fell upon a dark and mysterious looking being, which stood close to him. It appeared, at first, like a large black ball, but, the next instant, it could be seen, from its restless and sidelong attitudes, that it was a bear—a bear, too, that growled

loudly and savagely, while its eyeballs glared fiercely.

"Go away, fool!" said Steve, contemptuously. "I am a man without a cross, and your Indian jugglery will have no avail with me."

But the bear took no notice of this oburgation, save by growling and sliding into the hut, where, gaining the extreme end, it sat bolt upright on its hind legs, erect, like a man.

Steve continued smoking his pipe.

"Just drop that 'ere blanket afore the entrance," said a voice, in startling proximity to him.

But, Steve was never found napping. He neither started nor looked round, nor evinced any hurry. Slowly rising, he yawned, looked round the camp, saw that even the guard had joined the revelers, and dropped the blanket before his wigwam, thereby indicating that he meant to seek repose in slumber. None were likely at that hour to disturb him.

As soon as this had been satisfactorily carried out, he turned and saw that the grim head of the bear had been removed, revealing the most hideously painted Indian face he had yet seen.

"What looks the Shawnee in the wigwam of the pale-face prisoner?" said Steve, coldly.

"Tarnation snakes!" cried the other, with a capacious grin that revealed every tooth in his head; "don't you know me?"

"Tom Smith?"

"Steve?"

And the two rangers shook hands heartily.

Suddenly Steve seemed struck by some memory. He looked keenly into the youth's face, and read nothing there but hopeful good humor, as he produced a bottle of rum, a pile of cold venison steaks, some hominy cakes, and other rude eatables.

"Just use your chops," said Tom, quietly.

"I'm hungry, sin I bin on the watch two hours."

Determined to leave explanations until after supper, the hungry scout fell to, and, aided by his comrade, soon demolished a meal that, in civilized society, might have satisfied a dozen men and more.

Steve ate and drank with deliberation, all the while thinking deeply on the unaccountable composure of Tom, which he could only account for by supposing him utterly bereft of his wits.

Having picked every bone clean, polished the platter, and drank a pint of rum and water, Steve slowly filled up a second horn and proceeded to light his pipe.

All the while his glances were directed uneasily toward Tom Smith, who sat quite unconscious of any unusual demonstration of feeling on the part of his beloved tutor and master.

"Tom," cried Steve, suddenly, "do you know how I kin to be shut up yar?"

"Well, replied Tom, scratching his head, 'them lying thieves of copperheads do say that 'tis cuz they cove yon a jist-taking-yer knife out of the heart of a gal.'"

"You know it ain't true?"

"Lor, bless yer, Steve! in course I know it ain't; and more—it are only an excuse of them Shawnees to make yer join their tribe, seein' they guess you shute pretty well."

"Does yer know, Tom, who the gal is?"

"Well, I kin't exactly say as I does, but I know she's white."

"Did not you and Martha get took together?" continued Steve, believing the other had lost his wits.

"Yes, sure."

"And didn't you like her a bit?"

"Thunder! Yes."

"Well, thin, you take it mighty kule," added Steve, the scout becoming slightly annoyed.

"Takes what kule?" asked Tom.

"Why, all about Martha—"

"Well, I'm blowed," continued Tom, "if one on us two ain't a durned fule, for I can't make out a word you means."

"Have you not heard what the Injines charge me with?"

"Yes—killing a young woman."

"But, what young woman?"

"I don't know, I said."

"Tom Smith, they accuses me of killing, with my knife, your Martha!" and the scout's eyes were fixed on the ground with deep and almost uncontrollable emotion.

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"Why, all about Martha—"

moment he was committing the indiscretion of looking through into their quarters.

His eyes fell upon a kind of half cavern, large enough to shelter twenty or thirty persons, but protected only above and on three sides, the other being the yawning entrance, opening on the plain. In front, about five paces from the cavern, was a strong stockade, through which he could plainly see the red-skins moving about the camp as gravely and unconcernedly as if nothing had occurred on the previous night.

Within the space guarded by the stockade were Ella, Ettie, Matata, Martha, and the young Huron girl, engaged in the very unsentimental occupation of eating. All were, however, grave and thoughtful.

It appeared as if Martha had but recently arrived, and had been recording the events of the previous night.

Ella was as unconcerned as usual, her roses having fully returned, though her mind was as vacant as ever. Ettie was pale, wan, and thin, with anxiety and fear.

Every moment she dreaded some awful fate, worse even than the calamity that had stricken her sister.

Matata was thoughtful, and her sister, as became her age, was a silent listener.

"But what will they do with him in the end?" asked Ettie, hurriedly. "I can not bear this horrid life."

"Unless some aid come soon," said Martha, in a low tone, "Steve must do as Tom has done, turn Indian or die."

"Turn Indian?" murmured Ettie.

"Do not blame him," continued Martha, with a faint and transient blush, "he would have been brave and determined as any of the Avengers, but he was alone."

"True," said Ettie.

"And who knows," added Martha, "how useful he may yet prove in the many trials we may have to go through?"

"Sister—young—old—head—speak like missionary book," put in Matata, approvingly.

"What is he accused of?" asked Ettie.

"He is accused of murdering a young girl in cold blood," replied Martha.

"Kenev's brother?" said Prairie Rose.

"It is not true!" exclaimed Ettie.

"True?" said Martha; "certainly not. But he is a white man and a great warrior, and unless something is done he will die."

"Tis but a trifle, this accusation of murder. 'Tis the owner of Never-miss they will kill if they discover his identity."

"Gals," whispered a voice, "hist!—gals! Don't be frightened; it's only Steve."

For an instant there was a considerable amount of alarm on the part of the prisoners, though Prairie Rose never moved a muscle, merely glancing warily over the plain to watch the Indians, who at any moment might interrupt their converse.

"Where are you?" faltered Ettie.

"Close here—come to this chink."

Ettie, Martha, and Matata obeyed, the latter leaving the young Indian girl to watch the Shawnees. A conversation ensued relative to the position of the whole party, the results of which will be better seen in the course of our narrative. It may be remarked, however, that each spoke according to her own individual character and position.

Ettie was calm and resigned, but without hope; Martha had no fear of the consequences; Matata trusted wholly in her brave warrior.

The feelings of Steve may be best judged from his own words as he bade them all farewell.

"And now God bless you all!" he said.

"What is to be must be, and nobody can't mend it. If it please the Lord that these same thieving savages are to have my scalp, let 'em—I can only die once; but if it shall please the Lord to give me a chance of life, why, I'll take it! And now let the vagabonds come on as soon as they like; they'll find me a man without a cross, and no flincher."

And with these words he moved back within his cave, and sat down to wait the course of events.

Soon the door opened, and several Indian warriors appeared, ready to lead him forth.

Steve walked quietly in their midst, took a lump of meat and a gourd of water which were offered him, and munching his frugal breakfast walked to where the Shawnee chiefs awaited him.

The head men of the tribe, a dozen in number, were seated on logs round a large fire, the seat of honor being occupied by an aged warrior, whose prowess in battle, whose never wavering courage, and whose wisdom, and whose years, gave him a kind of right to preside on all occasions.

The captive was shown another log, upon which he seated himself, with a not ungraceful bow, and waited.

"My pale-face brother is very welcome," said Theanderigo, in a calm tone of voice; "what brings him to the wigwams of the Shawnees, so far from the hunting-grounds of the long-knives?"

"Well, Shawnee," replied Steve, quietly, "if yer expects any lies from me, you are very much mistaken. I'm up hill and down dale straight forward—so here goes. Have you not some white gals here as don't belong to yer?"

"There are maidens in our custody," continued the Indian, "but they were left with us by those who owned them."

"A darned circumstantial lie, chief! Them chaps as brought 'em here never owned them. They stole 'em—the mean, wall-eyed skunks!—and, so being, I came arter 'em—to see if as how I kin't get 'em back."

"My pale-face brother was not alone?"

"Well, not exactly—but I left my friends some distance back," continued Steve.

"Did the long-knife, who owns Never-miss, think to creep into our camp and carry off the maidens on his back?"

"No, Indian; but what's the use of all this circumlocution and bother? I'm your prisoner—a white man without a cross—do your worst!"

"The pale-face, my brother, has a name?"

"Well, the colonists, pretty much, call me Steve; but my friends, the Hurons, call me Never-miss."

A low murmur went around the group, as this avowal was made, assuring them that they had in their power one altogether worthy of their sanguinary and cruel vengeance.

"The name of our white brother has reached the villages of the Shawnees. Why does he walk with the Hurons?"

"Why do I consort with the Hurons?—because I likes 'em, because I've fought with 'em, hunted with 'em, and, barring my skin and my gift, have made myself pretty much a Huron, though I can't and will do a pale-face's duty on occasion."

"Never-miss," said Theanderigo, rising, "is a stout-hearted pale-face; he is not like the miserable Bandits—neither white nor

red, neither a beast nor a fish. Let him lay his hand upon his heart and say, 'I am all red—I am a Shawnee.' My people are ready to adopt him; a wigwam can be found, and then, when his people have been given into our hands, we will hail him as a great chief; the fawn-eyed girls shall crowd around him, and he shall know himself a great and mighty warrior."

"You want me, Black Hawk," said Steve, quietly, "to forswear the Hurons, to turn Shawnee, and, assuming Shawnee nature, lead my people into a trap, which shall give my new brothers much ammunition, many weapons, and scalps to hoist."

"My brother is a great chief—his heart is surely red—he can not be white."

"Shawnee," cried Steve, "there you are wrong. I say it, though it should be no boast on the part of a white, I am a man without a cross; I am white in blood, white in nature, and white in feelings, and I scorn your offer. My life is in your hands—take it. I have nothing else to give you, for the soul you would take is mine."

A dark frown lowered on every brow; a murmur of disappointment and rage succeeded—for these men, knowing the high reputation of Steve, and aware that he had lived years with the Hurons, were not without the hope of adopting so mighty a warrior into their tribe.

Theanderigo drew the chiefs apart, and a further conference ensued. When the chiefs resented themselves it was with the stern air of judges.

The pale-face has a forked tongue," said Black Hawk, "he has two words for the Huron, and one for the Shawnees."

"I have no two words," said Steve.

"Why has the long-knife said that he came in search of the singing-birds?" continued Theanderigo.

"I did."

"Then, why, like a cowardly snake, did he creep upon, ill-use and murder a Shawnee girl?"

The scout arose, stood erect—his cheeks crimsoned, his eyes flashing fire, his whole man the picture of honest indignation and disgust.

"Whoever says that Never-miss ever hurt child or child, ever laid hand on woman, or man either, except in lawful warfare, lies! I know nothing of the murder."

"Is not this my brother's knife?"

"It is."

"Will my brother explain?"

"I shot a deer, and with that ar' knife I cut it up; then, like a fool, I forgot it, and when I trotted back in search of it, why, it wasn't to be seen nowhere. I'm apprehensive, howsoever, of the malicious rogue as tooked it."

"To whom does my brother allude?"

"To one of them sneaking, one-eyed, cowardly knaves as stole the Judge's gals."

The Indians again exchanged glances, and once more drew apart, leaving Steve to himself. But he was not alone long—for presently a youthful warrior, with lowering brows and angry mien, stepped from the ranks, followed by an aged woman, and halted in front of him.

"My name is Rattlesnake!" he said, waving his arms on high, and looking ferociously at Steve.

"Is it?" said the scout, coolly; "well, mine's Never-miss. I ain't a boaster, but can you talk to your totem?"

And, without moving a muscle of his face, Steve gave the hiss of a snake so naturally as if he had trodden on one.

One glance, however, reassured him.

"My brother is very cunning, but 'tis the cunning of the pale-face. Where is the White Briar?"

"Don't know."

"The long-knife is a liar!—it is the girl he has killed! Give her back to Rattlesnake, or the scalp of Never-miss shall dry in the sun ere the red star sets over the western hills!"

"I know nothing of the gal never having seen her," said Steve, quietly.

"Skunk of the pale-faces!" cried a shrill voice behind the warrior, emanating from an aged and hideous creature, "where is my daughter? You dare not fight with men—you are a woman—you are a petticoat warrior! Ha! ha!—the blood of an Indian maiden calls for vengeance. It has not sunk into the earth—it shall be buried with your groans! A Shawnee woman hears music—but it is not the music that comes from the lips of a red-skin—no Indian has played so like a hog. Wait, daughter of Wataya—he comes—the blood-spiller—the base, cowardly long-knife!"

"Woman!"

"Hush! Wataya will not hear you. Dog—pig—woodchuck—hedgehog—toad—spider—catamount—rabbit!" she shrieked.

At that moment Theanderigo caught her by the arm, and sent her spinning to some distance.

The next moment Steve was fastened to an upright post, an utterly helpless prisoner. All signs of hesitation or good-feeling had vanished from the face of the Shawnees, who now looked at Never-miss with fierce eyes and lowering brows.

"Are the bones of our young men and women in their proper resting-places?" began Theanderigo, who, like all Indians, dearly loved to hear himself talk. "And why is it that they are not? Is it our fault, or is it the fault of the greedy and cruel long-knives? Where are the spirits of our friends? Wandering without tomahawks and guns, without buck-skin to their backs or moccasins to their feet—naked, poor as when they were born. Shall we suffer this? Shall we allow our children to go hungry, and enter the land of the just like slaves, or like free and stalwart warriors? Brothers, countrymen, chiefs, and ye young warriors, who as yet but paint yourselves with black, what say you? Shall our sister go unavenged? Shall he live, or shall he die?"

"Die!" said the aged chief, waving his tomahawk.

"Die!" roared the multitude.

"Die!" said Rattlesnake, furiously, who, with wild and ferocious mien, had been drinking in every word of the speaker.

As the last words were uttered, a deadly look of malice settled on his countenance.

As Black Hawk concluded his speech, Rattlesnake leaped to his feet with a demoniac yell, whirled his little glittering ax over his head, and darted it at the prisoner.

A gleam of light passed through the air, and the scout felt one of his cords cut, while he was un wounded. But not a glance told of any emotion; the white man stood erect, cold and steady as a marble statue.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 59.)

It is reported that the inventor of cork legs is dragging out a dreary existence in a Pennsylvania poorhouse.

"Trainin' Hosses."

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"TALK about trainin' hosses! Why, I tell you, that thar ain't no set o' people on the air that'll come in a week's travel uv them Buffler Injuns fur the kind o' work."

positively asserted the old trapper, around whom a lot of us were gathered.

Somebody had been telling about Rarey and his wonderful feats with untamable horses, having read the account in an old newspaper left in a deserted camp by some emigrants.

A discussion had ensued, in which the speaker, as above quoted, took part.

"Buffalo Indians! Why, they're not as good at it as the Comanchi," said one of the party.

"Ain't they! Oh, no, I reckon not! Emmy how, not ef you sez so," snapped the old fellow. "Howsomdever, I tell you they ar', an' ef you'll keep yer fly-trap shet long anuff, I'll tell you all a feeble circumstance 'bout them Buffler Injuns."

"T'wixt in the summer '50, of I remember rightly, an' me an' Jim Halliday an' sum more, five more, uv the boycees war up the Bufflers country, arter pelts."

"We hedn't seen any sign uv the redskins fur more'n a month, an' we war all expectin' ter get in right side up, with a wheen o' skins; but, lordy! lads, thar's many a slip up, especially of a feller's goin' down hill, an' thar grom' ar' slicker. Thet's enigh, I kin come to it."

"The day we found a heifer trail, crossin' no great ways from our camp, an' see it war a war party, out on a rampage. Thet night we moved our camp out on the edge uv the timber, whar we hed the perrary in front like, fur our old place wur powerful handy fur a attack; an' we kinder reckined we'd ketch it afore we wur much older."

"Shore anuff, jess as day war breakin' next mornin', the Bufflers kin down onto us like a lot o' pizen hornets."

"Talk 'bout yer Comanchi ridin'! I Waugh! Why, they don't know a mustang from the butt end uv a red-wood stump, long side o' these here Buffler Injuns."

"Jess to see 'em! Ridin' hyar and thar. Now on the tip end o' the'r mustangs' ears, an' then on his tail, and then under his belly, an' so on."

"Uv course, they kept cl'ar o' the timber, ridin' round an' round on the perrary—then dashin' off outen sight, an' then comin' back ag'in, hangin' behind the'r hosses, so thet yer couldn't see hair nor hide, 'cept only the end uv the'r moccasins over the critter's back."

"T'wixt the beautifullest sight ever I see, to see them hosses dash out, scoot round, an' then fetch up, all in a row, lookin' at us."

"Well, this hyar sort uv thing war kept up for an hour or more, an' by-in-by we boycees begin ter get tired uv it."

"I don't see what them 'er devils ar' arter, sed Jim ter me, an' I sed I didn't nutter."

"I tell you what it ar', boycees," he says. "The next time them cusses goes ter cavortin' out yander, I, fur one, an' willin' ter charge 'em."

"Yes, an' lose yer ha'r," sed another one o' 'em.

"Don't keer a cuss. 'Nuff uv a thing ar' 'nuff, even frum an Injun, an' I won't stan' it."

"Well, hyar they kin ag'in. One arter another, in a straight line, scootin' aroun' in a rick, an' then fotchin' up all frontin', jess as before."

"Not a thing uv them Injuns could yer see, 'cept only the pint uv the'r moccasins over the hosses' back."

"Thar stood them critters, all in a row, not facin' us plum center so es we could see both sides, but sorter slantindickler like, you know."

"Hyar goes, boycees," shouted Jim, an' he war jess on the pint uv makin' a rush, when, suddenly, I see suthin' thet jess made my ha'r rise up."

"Thar war them hosses, thet war plain 'nuff, but whar war the Injuns? fur nary a one uv the cunnin' devils war ahind the bodies. No, sire! Not a Injun, nor no part uv one, 'cept only a moccasin tied on to the straps ter look like it wur the'r foot."

"I sed the'r game in a mink."

"While them hosses war amusin' us out on the perrary, they wur creepin' round ter take us in the rear."

"Bout face, boycees!" sez I. "The cusses hed played us a trick. Thet I ev'

"B'ARSKIN MAT."

A "Camp-Fire Yarn" done up into Rhyme.

BY JOS. F. MORAN.

Wal, boyces, my name's Mat Pringle, ur "B'arskin Mat."
I hail from old Kentuck—s'pose ye've all guessed that—
Leastwise 'twas easy 'nough for yer to l'arn,
For I war knockin' 'round that old State half of me l'ife,
With nary cumrade 'cept this here gun an' knife—
Yeou say yer'd like to hear me spin a yarn?
Wal—s'pose I may as well—seein' as how it is yeou,
Just set down an' tell yer a little thing ur two,
To kinder occupy our l'iesur' time;
So shuv that ar "cuntin' round to'ard this way, boss,
An' let's snibbe an nip—that's all right, old hoss—
By Jum! I tell yer, boyces, that licker's prime!
Oh, how I cum to be call'd old "B'arskin Mat!"
Wal, no, 'twon't take wery long to tell yer that—
Yer see as how't happen'd in this here wile;
Sum years ago wille scourtin' 'round in old Kentuck,
To cum across a nuther huntin'-party 'twar my l'uck—
'Twas Nat Long, Pete Wilkins an' sum more uv the boys.
I know'd in a minnit as how that wur sumthin' wrong,
So I slips rite up to my old "rite bower," Nat Long,
An' sez, "Hello, Nat, old boy, w'at's up now?"
Yer face is as long as yer gun-barrel, an' looks jest as cross—
W'at in thunder is in the wind now, eh, old hoss?
Cum, tell us w'at in blazes is the row!"
"Wal," sez he, "yer see as how me an' t'other boyces here
We got all out er grub an' was on the look-out fur deer,
Ur any thin' else w'at might be good to eat—
But 'bout three hours ago ur more inste'd uv a deer
We struck the trail uv a grizzly an' foller'd it up to here—
But they won't budge another fut an'—I'm beat!"
"Nat," sez I, "I'm in want uv sum 'citemint jest 'bout now,
An' ain't got nuthin' w'at's wery partickler to do, nohow—
S'pose yeou stick by the boyces here fur a wile,
An' I'll jest feller this chap myself, an' yeou kin bet
As how I'll make his darn ugly, stiff old cacas' sw'et—
Afore I've been in his tracks fur more'n a mile!"
Now, boyces, Nat ain't no coward, yeou kin jest bet that,
If he did rath'er stick to the boyces than foller that ar b'ar,
So I jest kinder "jumped in his boots" an' piked off—
Uv course 't' futher follers lar'd an' jeer'd but I know'd my biz,
An' as I had a fresh trail to track an' my blood wuz riz,
I thort I wuz good fur more'n one scoff!
An' I tell yer the way I lit out wur a caushen to snakes—
Why, jest to see me cumin' or'ght to have gov that b'ar the shakes!
But, by Jum! yeou kin bet as how it didn't, now,
Fur when I got to the end uv—I guess 'bout a mile,
Thar set the darn critter on a log all uv a pile,
An' he jest lookin' at me comin', I saw!
It kinder tech'd me to see him takin' uv things so cool,
So I let up an' put a hole rite inter the darn fool!
Then yeou'd or'ght to seen that grizzly cum fur me!
Wal, boyces, thar's no use uv me tellin' yer all 'bout that ar fight,
But yeou bet I thort I'd never live to see much more daylight—
But, by Jum! I'm all here yet as yer kin see!
Yes, arter a good deal uv huggin' an' scratchin' I found his heart,
Then took my knife an' pecl'd off his hide purty rite smart—
Jest to show the boys that I hed got my game;
When they see'd me cumin' with that skin how they did yell!
An' that's 'bout all uv that yarn w'at I've got fur to tell,
'Cept—ever sence—"B'arskin Mat" he's be'n my name!"

United by a Foe.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

SOME half a mile from the little valley in which nestled a picturesque building of sun-burnt adobe, stood a young woman. Her hair, her face, her eyes, all might have caused a casual observer to think her a *Jalapena*—one of those women whose marvelous beauty of face and form have rendered the valley of Jalapa celebrated throughout that land so famed for lovely females. But though well worthy of being classed with them, Virginia Benham was an American—a native of the sunny South. Her dress, her coiffure were American in style. Just then there was a look of deep anxiety upon her face as she crouched behind the fallen tree-top upon the little knoll. There was a burning glow in the eyes that gazed so intently along the valley.

A picturesque sight was there. A troop of near two-score horsemen were riding slowly along, their fiery chargers fretting proudly against the uncharged restraint of a tightly-drawn rein. The dress betrayed their nationality.

The slashed and embroidered, gold-spangled and silver-buttoned *calzoneros*, the spowly-white lawn beneath, the broad-brimmed, gold-banded sombrero, the long lances, fluttering *penons* of gaudy colors, the clumsy *escopettes*; all proclaimed them Mexican *laneros*.

At their head rode one whom Virginia Benham well knew. He was one whom hitherto she had merely despised. Now she saw she had more cause to fear him. He had sworn revenge when she rejected his suit. A cold thrill pervaded her frame as she thought that perhaps this was the cause of his being here, so near to her home, as well as the American forces at Jalapa. He had men enough to overcome all opposition that could be offered by the inmates of the hacienda. There seemed nothing to prevent him from running riot as his mad passions impelled him.

Virginia stealthily crept along the hill-side, keeping the guerrillas in view while taking care to remain unobserved herself, and in a few minutes saw that her worst fears were realized.

As the hacienda was sighted, Roger Hensley sounded the "analele," and the band dashed ahead at a swift pace. The great gates were entered, and several of the *peons* shot down, or else impaled upon the long lances. A scene of terrible confusion followed.

Virginia suddenly started. The form of a milk-white mustang grazing further up the valley met her gaze. A glow of hope and strong resolve lighted up her features through the ghastly pallor that had pervaded them.

She would mount and fly for assistance. If too late to save, she could yet avenge. The spoiler should not live long to boast over his exploit.

It was not far to the city. Queen could cover the three miles in a quarter of an hour, rough as were the roads. Perhaps it would not be too late.

The maiden glided swiftly toward the grazing mustang, and called it by name. The intelligent creature greeted her mistress with a whimper of delight. But Virginia could not stop to return the caress. A minute lost now might prove fatal.

She sprang upon the mare's back, and urged it forward. She had ridden thus be-

fore, for sport; surely she could now that the lives of those so dear were dependent upon her exertions.

A word—a pat upon the neck, or gentle swaying of the lithe body, told the mustang her route, and the faithful creature sped along the rocky road as though with winged feet. And yet it seemed an age ere Virginia heard the challenge of the American outpost.

A glad cry broke from her lips, not unmingled with surprise, as she recognized an officer standing near the sentinel. The recognition was mutual.

"My God! Miss—Virginia, what does this mean? Has any thing—?"
"Yes—yes; take me to the General, quick! It is life and death! Oh, hasten!" she gasped, breathless, and almost fainting.

"This way—follow me. Tell me as we go—what is the matter?"
"A band of guerrillas—Hensley—they are at our house—murdering! Oh! my God! hasten—hasten!"

"How many? Did you notice?"
"Forty. I counted them. Can you help me? I know no one else to ask. I would not trouble you, but—"

"I will help you. It is a pleasure, not a trouble, to assist you. But here is the place," and the officer assisted Virginia to alight, and led the way into the house.

A strong, hearty voice replied to his knock, bidding them enter. And then they stood before General Scott.

"Captain Freeman?"
"Yes, General. Excuse my want of ceremony; it is a matter of life and death. There is a squad of guerrillas who have attacked this lady's house, and she has fled hither for assistance. May I lead my company to the rescue?" hurriedly uttered the soldier.

"For love of God! General, do not refuse!" murmured Virginia, almost fainting. "It is my father—my mother!"

"You know this lady, captain? You know Himman was led into an ambush and killed on a pretext like this."

"I will answer for her truth with my life, my honor, sir."
"Enough. Go and get your men ready; I will question her meanwhile."

The general had had only time for a few pointed queries ere Freeman returned and reported all in readiness.

"Very well. You can go. This lady will remain here while you do what you can."

"No—no, I must go, too! I must know the worst! I should die here in suspense."



UNITED BY A FOE.

"I have her horse fixed! It would be best, perhaps, General."

The commander made no answer, but nodding, he led Virginia outside and assisted her into the saddle. Then the troop filed from the city at a rapid trot.

For two miles this was maintained. Then Captain Freeman gave a few quick orders to his lieutenant, who then spurred away at the head of half the men, in order to cut off the retreat of the marauders by approaching through the opposite end of the valley.

The two—Virginia and Freeman—rode side by side, a few yards in advance. The soldier was thoughtful, and a somber light filled his eyes. Suddenly he spoke.

"Virginia, you said your father and your mother. Is there no one else for whom you are anxious?"

"None—except the servants. I forgot them."

"Your husband?"

"My—? I have no husband! I am not married."

"Virginia, do you know what you say? You wrote me you were married!"

"I—never! But do not talk of that now. I can not bear it now that they are in danger—perhaps dead!" wearily responded the maiden, her head drooping faintly.

A clear bugle-call sounded from a short distance ahead. It was the signal of Lieutenant Holdsworth, announcing that he had gained his position.

"Virginia, await us here. There may be danger. And I must see you after this. There has been foul play here!"

"No, I will go. I can not stay here!"

"Forward, men!"

Then there arose a wild uproar as the bugle-call was answered, and the two squads rushed toward the hacienda. The guerrillas had paused to plunder the house, and their leader to search for Virginia. Thus they were taken by surprise, and could offer but slight resistance.

At the first tumult their horses fled, and the robbers found themselves surrounded and at their enemies' mercy. The sight of the ruined house, the murdered slaves, fired the Americans to frenzy. They thought not of quarter—only vengeance.

Virginia rushed to where a little group of captives were lying, bound, and with a wild cry of joy, found her parents alive and injured. Hensley had reserved them, in hopes that by threatening their lives, Virginia would be induced to consent to his wishes.

A few minutes ended the *melee*. Those of the guerrillas who were not killed were taken prisoners. Hensley was found to be

among the dead. He had met a too merciful fate by the sword of Henry Freeman.

Then the latter sought Virginia. She was willingly led aside, and the two soon came to an agreeable understanding.

They had long been lovers, though not formally engaged. Freeman had received a note, purporting to come from her hand, announcing her marriage, and requesting that he would forget her existence, or that they had ever been acquainted.

Roger Hensley had forged the note, and then he told Virginia almost the same falsehoods about Freeman, trusting to win her for himself. His fabrications had failed in this respect, however, and joining a body of guerrillas, he had sought to take by force what had been denied his pleadings.

In doing so, he had met his death and unconsciously brought the estranged lovers together again. Truly they had been united by a foe.

Mr. Benham and his family proceeded with Captain Freeman at once to Jalapa, where they remained until after the triumphal entry of General Scott into Mexico, and the restoration of peace, when they returned to the States. Not long afterward, Henry Freeman claimed the fulfillment of the promise made by Virginia Benham during the ride to Jalapa, and they were married at the dear old plantation where they had first met.

Their future was like one long dream of almost unalloyed happiness.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

A Close Acquaintance with Judge Lynch.

BY CAPT. BRUIN ADAMS.

THE mere act of recalling the event I am about to relate causes a quickened pulsation, and, although years have elapsed since that night, yet the scene rises as vividly before my eyes as though it had been but yesterday.

Early one morning I had, while hunting in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, shot and wounded a fine, large buck, which, though bleeding freely, had broke away with long, steady leaps, down the slope of the ridge upon which I had stalked him.



UNITED BY A FOE.

Eager to bag the game, I threw myself upon his trail, and followed for several hours, but finally dropped it in a rocky ravine. After more than an hour's careful search, I came to the conclusion that it was utterly lost, at the same time awakening to the reality that I was in about the same condition.

Lost in the mountains of Kentucky! It may seem a matter of little moment to the general reader, who thinks that every square mile of so civilized a state contains a farmhouse or fenced fields; but, when I assure him that a man may, in these regions, travel for days and not meet a human being, or see the signs of one, he may be inclined to believe that a person may be lost there, in the real sense of the word.

However, it is not so much with the fact of my being lost, as with certain circumstances that grew out of it, that we have to do. That night I camped in a valley near at hand, being thoroughly wearied, and early next morning I resumed the search for some path or other indication that would lead me out of the mountains in the right direction.

As though to defeat me at every turn, the sky was overcast with dense masses of black, stormy-looking clouds, completely hiding the position of the sun, and threatening rain or snow at every moment.

Without pausing to detail the events of the day's travel, I will merely say that when night fell, I was more completely bewildered than ever, and, as I eventually found, further than ever from the place I had started.

Now thoroughly aroused to the necessity of getting out of the mountains, by some means, I once more laid a straight course, and, until far into the night, tramped steadily ahead, turning neither to the right nor the left, breasting steep activities, and crossing deep ravines, as they came in my way.

From the crest of a bald ridge, where I had paused a moment for breath, I heard the faint, far-off crow of a cock—a most welcome sound; for, where the cock was, there were human beings as well.

It was the midnight crow, I knew, being only thrice repeated.

Almost at the same moment, and while allowing my eyes to roam over the vast gulf of darkness that lay below, I caught the gleam of a light—only for an instant, but it was sufficient to mark my course.

Down the rugged slope of the hill, and out into the densely wooded bottom beneath, I cautiously felt my way in the direction where I had seen the light.

It was a wild country, and there were strange stories afloat of those who dwelt amid its fastnesses; and hence I knew that some degree of caution was necessary in approaching what might prove a camp of horse-thieves or headquarters of a band of cut-throats.

From a slight rise upon the other side of the bottom, I again caught sight of the fire, and, after advancing a couple of hundred yards, it came plainly into view, as did, also, every part of the little clearing in which it had been built.

Creeeping noiselessly forward, I obtained a position behind a large poplar, within twenty yards of where the brush-heap was burning, and, peeping cautiously around the trunk, beheld a sight at once novel and startling.

The bright flames that lit up the natural amphitheater, and illumined the leafy arches overhead, brought out in bold relief against the darkened background the forms of at least three score of rough-looking men, who were drawn up in a circle about the fire.

Not a sound, save the crackling of burning logs, broke the oppressive stillness. Stern and silent the mysterious figures stood, each one leaning upon the long rifle that was the inseparable companion of man in those regions.

For a few moments I remained utterly amazed at so unusual a scene, but, as my eyes became accustomed to the glare, and I more carefully noted the position of all parties, the solution suddenly flashed upon my mind.

Upon the further side of the circle, seated upon a fallen log, I beheld a man whose pined arms, together with a rope around his neck, declared him to be a prisoner, while, at his feet, groveling upon the earth, in abject terror, was another individual, who, it was plain to see, was in the same position as the first.

The one upon the log was calm—evidently the calmness of despair—though, beyond a face deadly pale, he evinced no signs of fear.

An execution—and by Lynch Law! That was the reason of this midnight assembly.

Here, amid the mountains, in the deep recesses of the forest, these two men were to perish for real or fancied crimes—as likely to be the one as the other.

At once the silence was broken.
"Let this man's accusers stand forth,"

said a harsh, stern voice, and instantly two men stepped out from the circle.

"I accuse him of having broken the oath of our league, by attempting to betray two of our members into the hands of the officers," said one.

"And I witness the truth of the charge," said the second.

"Let the prisoner stand up," again spoke the man, who was evidently the leader.

The prisoner upon the log rose to his feet, and, with a defiant air, strode into the open space.

"I do not deny the charge," he said; "even if I did, it would be useless. I did try to give those two men over, but it was because they had wronged me, and I had sworn revenge. I did not seek to betray the league. I could have done so, had I wished. Now, do your work—and do it quickly!"

At the fearless, or desperate, man drew his powerful figure to its fullest height, and glanced round the circle of stern faces.

Without speaking, half a dozen men seized the condemned wretch, and, dragging him beneath a projecting limb, threw the rope over it, and, in an instant, he was swinging between heaven and earth.

When all struggling had ceased, the body was lowered, dragged on one side, and again the silent circle was formed as before.

But the other prisoner was made of different stuff.

When commanded to step forth, that he might answer to the same charge, or, at least, of being accessory to the crime, he set up a howl of agonized terror that made the forest ring. Finding him incapable of standing, he was roughly seized and conveyed to the place of execution, the while uttering the wildest shrieks and prayers for mercy.

But he might as well have appealed to the very stones or trees.

The executioners were evidently skillful hands at such work, and the howling wretch was quickly dangling from the rope's end.

It can readily be imagined that, by this time, I had been wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement, the feeling not altogether unmingled with absolute terror.

Completely dazed—to use an expressive word—I forgot time and place, and with them the caution that had hitherto marked my movements. Fascinated by the horrid spectacle, I stepped slightly on one side to gain a better view.

My foot fell upon a dry twig, and instantly a sharp crack broke the silence.

Every eye was instantly turned full upon me, for I was clear of the tree, and within the line of light, and almost before I knew it, I was being violently dragged forward to the open glade.

"A spy!—a traitor!—hang him!" were some of the not very comforting exclamations that met my ears, while, in the mean time, I was nearly strangled by the grasp of a brawny ruffian on my throat.

Silence was at length obtained, and I was led forward, and confronted by him who had acted as judge, or leader.

His questioning was brief, and to the point. Who I was, where from, and, more particularly, how I came there, and what had I heard. I at once saw that the straightforward truth was my best chance, and I told it, even admitting that I had heard the charges made against and answers of the first prisoner.

The stern face of my questioner darkened as I told him this, and, silently motioning to the two men who stood at my side, they led me aside, into the forest.

I saw the crowd gather thickly about their leader, and, with strained eyes and ears, strove to catch what was said and done.

The council was long—at least, so it seemed to me—and, at times, violent. My life hung upon a thread, and I knew it. At length the crowd parted, and all assumed their former positions.

I was again led forward, and confronted by the man who was to pronounce sentence, either for life or death.

Mercy had prevailed, and I was saved. My story had been believed, and the only penalty exacted was that I should take such an oath as they saw fit to bind me by.

I need hardly say I took it, and kept it—for it was a fearful one.

That night I was taken to a cabin in the mountain, and the next morning, carefully blindfolded, was mounted and led across the country to a place that I was familiar with.

Five years later, the league—a powerful band of horse-thieves—was broken up, many of its members perishing in the conflict, or else, being captured, suffered long terms of imprisonment.

Beat Time's Notes.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

For sale, one elegant and well-furnished frame fence, with all the modern improvements; spacious and well shaded; brick-yard attached.

One sheriff's warrant, clear title and duly attested, drawn in favor of the undersigned. For sale cheap.

For rent, a few well-furnished rooms in the calaboose, with board. Singular gentlemen preferred.

WANTED, a few more men to take charge of my affairs and tell me what to do.

WANTED, everybody to know that a bolt factory is nothing less than a railroad refreshment saloon.

WANTED, a No. 1 coachman to drive a trade, to drive the pigs out of the lot, and to drive a pin.

For rent, one fine room, with four houses in it, and one saloon, with a cool beer-seller behind the counter.

For sale, a villa-nous residence on the Hudson. Fine tea-grounds attached; an excellent dry well; summer kitchen without sides or roof; fine pump, with cistern in it.

WANTED, some of my neighbors to trade off their pianos for some new kind with nothing in them.

To let. The north side of a lamp-post on the corner of the street. Fine accommodations for persons desiring sound sleep. Location central, and within ten minutes' walk of the Post-Office.

I HAVE learned that the reason a late politician had such great influence over his constituents was because he had the influenza.

LIQUORS that are warranted to kill at a distance may be called arrow-matic beverages.

If I were obliged to go armed, I would only invest in a single-barreled pistol, for if I got into a muss, I would only shoot once, and run anyway.

If the devil were dead, as is so often remarked, the question is, where would he go, or stay at home?

A CERTAIN patent medicine is warranted to restore the liver and reanimate the dier.

FORTUNE flies, like the crab, with her face ever toward you.

THE fellow who wrote "Oh, Summer, Why Don't You Come?" had the summer come-plaint.

THE young lady who last entertained me with music sung "Over the Hills and Far Away," and the way she sung it made me really wish I was, myself. When she began "I'll Sing the Song You Used to Love," I begged her not to do it. When she sung "I Can Not Sing To-Night," I thought she was extremely right. When she sung "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother," I thought that would certainly be the rock upon which we wouldn't split; and when she began "Good-Night," I took my hat, said farewell, and left.

THE opossum is a tender-hearted animal, because it takes kindly to its paw-paw.

MARKET REPORTS.

UMBRELLAS, a shade lower.
Coal Oil, light demand.
Cheese, nothing doing in that article except skippers.

Wheat, in the ear, going up.
Rye, going down.
Hogs, not enough to meat the demand.

Butter, stale market.
Bark, more at night than is wanted.
Beef-steak, very firm.

But and feathers, small demand.
Shot, small sales.
Retractions, large demand.

Fish, scaly.
Small change, large.
Large change, small.

BEAT TIME.